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280 (21)



James Lennox.

Socres

27



**UNDER THE
ESPECIAL PATRONAGE**



**OF
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,
THE QUEEN.**

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EDITED BY
THE REV. R. CATTERMOLE, B.D.
AND
THE REV. H. STEBBING, M.A.

VOL. XXIII.

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Engraved by J. Rogers

THE HOLY FAMILY.

*From a Painting by Correggio.
in the National Gallery.*





THE END OF THE ROAD

THE END OF THE ROAD

THE END OF THE ROAD

THE
GREAT EXEMPLAR
OF
SANCTITY AND HOLY LIFE,
DESCRIBED IN
THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH
OF OUR EVER-BLESSED SAVIOUR,
JESUS CHRIST:
WITH
CONSIDERATIONS AND DISCOURSES UPON THE
SEVERAL PARTS OF THE STORY;
AND PRAYERS FITTED TO THE SEVERAL MYSTERIES.

BY JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.
CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO KING CHARLES THE FIRST, AND SOME TIME
LORD BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR.

VOL. II.

Qui sequitur me, non ambulat in tenebris.

WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,
By THE REV. H. STEBBING, M.A.

LONDON:

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C.



INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

THE design of the "Life of Christ" is essentially practical; but in such a manner that every rule of practice is exhibited in close connexion with the doctrine and example by which it is supported in the Christian system. Never did a theologian look with closer attention to the morality of spiritual things than the author of this work. He contemplated with clear and exulting thoughts the glory of the gospel; but he always turned from the speculative study of its mysteries, to inquire of his mind what it had learnt which might lead others to virtue and holiness. The beauty of the objects which revealed themselves to his heart made him anxious to see men conforming themselves to the same standard of excellence. He wished to behold the result of Christ's teaching and example in the living graces and pious actions of his fellow-beings. It was not a religion simply, but a kingdom that Christ came to establish; and

a kingdom governed by laws which should bind both the hearts and thoughts of men to conformity with the prescribed example. Our author saw the vital importance of attending to this consideration. He knew that an outward assent to truth is so easy and general, that the bulk of mankind require to be continually warned against an overvaluing of their professions; and that the most efficient warnings are those which teach by pure and venerated examples. In this case sophistry affords no shelter: there are no various readings to involve the lesson in doubt; and the only alternative is conformity or the shame of inconsistency. But Jeremy Taylor did not content himself with stating the argument of his solemn theme theologically. He had spent many years in the profound study of whatever had been written on the subject of moral and religious truth. The works of the abstrusest logicians, of the most eloquent philosophers and orators, of the most erudite historians, and of the poets of every age, were as familiar to him as his Bible. Combined and spread out in his capacious memory, the lessons which these teachers of many various ages and nations had composed, formed a chart of universal experience. From this he learnt how the best and purest intellects had viewed, from generation to generation, the vices and follies of their race; what efforts they had made for their correction;

and how they had been foiled by the strength of human passion, and the deceitful practices of the world. Thence, too, he learnt the laws which mankind, left to themselves, strike out by the force of necessity; the principles developed in the course which nations pursue from barbarism to civilization; and the wants and desires which are most universal, most urgent, most unappeasable by superficial applications.

The knowledge thus acquired was of the highest value to a mind like his. It afforded it new motives for exertion; pointed out the most useful lines of inquiry; and inspired it with that catholic respect for human talent and human virtue, which adds a grace to many of his most beautiful meditations. All that the intellect of man could do in moral inquiry was known to him, when he sat down to unfold the graces of spiritual truth: all that man had been able to do in the way of virtue was present to his memory, or hung like a sunny halo around his imagination. It was not, therefore, with views contracted by a particular study or professional prejudices, that this great man set about the task of describing the grandeur and nobility of his Saviour's character. He was too full both of thought and benevolence to lose sight of that union between truth and charity, the fruit of which is the loveliest of human virtues. Wherever the seeds of good could be traced, how-

ever deep they lay buried in the untilled soil of fallen humanity, there he was willing to labour; and he wrought with the patience of skilful and habituated reflection, till he planted these germs of wisdom in the more fruitful fields of true religion. There they put forth the glory of the spirit which gave them life; there they bloomed in the rich beauty of divine grace: but the cultivator never forgot to acknowledge where he had found them, or to indicate his reverence for the capabilities of human thought. The philosopher, therefore, may read his meditations with no less delight than the humble Christian; and the scholar will discover in his pages a clue, by following which he may penetrate the profoundest paths of learning.

The method pursued in the life of Christ is admirably adapted to the purposes of sound instruction. A narrative of events, like those recorded in the gospel, can scarcely fail of impressing the mind with a sentiment of awe and wonder. But when we are satisfied with the feeling, we rarely proceed to reason on the foundations of the sentiment; and as no strong emotion is of long continuance, a prudent teacher is always anxious to provide against the moment when the mind will sink back to its ordinary level. A clear exposition of the value and reasonableness of his maxims—of the general applicability of the examples which he instances, is the surest preservative against the illusions of an

ardent temperament. Nor is such a method of instruction less useful when applied to the cold and unwilling affections of a worldly mind. Reason, with truth for its support, is always formidable. It makes its advances with caution and gravity: it neither surprises nor excites, but it induces the conscience to listen to its whispers, when the most stormy eloquence of the imagination fails to awaken a single permanent thought or profitable consideration. Assured of this, our author has given his instructions by way of a commentary on the divine example proposed for contemplation, and pursued the theme, in all its particulars, with a close attention to the soundest species of moral argumentation.

The topics afforded by the earlier portions of the sacred history require careful treatment, not only because of their importance, but because of the manner in which they are stated. Thus how slight, to ordinary apprehensions, are the signs of deep maternal care on the part of the Virgin Mary, yet how clear and beautiful are the instructions derived from these signs, by the contemplative eye of spiritual philosophy! How little is said respecting our Lord's conduct in his youth; yet how full and complete is the example, when it is shown by a sanctified reason, that in the slight allusions of the record are implied the most powerful arguments to filial obedience and a virtuous youth ever urged by the pen of moralists!

It is at first sight remarkable, that a greater number of particulars are not recorded of our Saviour's early life. The believer naturally wishes to be made acquainted with the circumstances under which that growth in wisdom and grace took place, which rendered him every day more venerable among men, and more beloved of God. So strong was this feeling in the first ages of the church, that imposture readily availed itself of it for the diffusion of many errors. The apocryphal histories of Christ abounded with notices of his youth : and curiosity was fed by anecdotes of the wonders he exhibited, till enthusiasm itself blushed at its credulity. But a proper consideration of the character of our Lord, and of the design of his history, will convince a reasonable inquirer, that this particularity of detail ought never to have been looked for. An ordinary mind can only develop itself by passing through a long line of circumstances ; and it is of importance that we should know these circumstances, only as they have tended to its development. When a man of genius conquers his circumstances—rises so above them that they lie like a mist beneath him, while he pursues his course through a purer atmosphere, a minute account of these non-influencing circumstances would be as uninteresting as it would be useless. But the mere human character of our Lord was so perfect, that both in its moral and intellectual features it asserted an independence

of all the common and unimportant appeals of life. He saw too clearly, from the first, how wide are the distinctions between right and wrong, between the attractions of folly and the noble pleasures of wisdom, to be diverted from the path of holiness. He could never have become involved in the labyrinths of error, which render every circumstance, even the most trifling, of importance to most men ; nor could the objects presented to his gaze, and which usually make so favourable an impression on our hearts and imaginations, have affected him with sufficient force to change the current of his thoughts, steadily flowing on in the channels of divine meditation. For these and other similar reasons, a circumstantial account of our Lord's early life was not required. His character was formed not from without, but from within. The sublime virtues he displayed were ripened not by experience, but by a wisdom anticipating experience ; and it would have been to give an entirely wrong view of the nature of his character, had the curiosity of men been gratified by details of events which never reached even the outworks of his mind.

While, however, circumstances are not stated, it is distinctly intimated that the unfolding of his character was progressive—a point of importance ; for in acquiring a progressive fulness of grace and power, the principles of its advancement, the

spirit which ruled within became manifest, and those principles and that spirit are the objects to be continually sought and contemplated by the imitator of Christ. On such points again as the circumcision and baptism of our Lord, it is highly necessary that the believer should reflect with equal care and seriousness. But as forming parts of the general record, they are so succinctly stated, that if the mind be not habituated to meditation, it passes them over with an attention wholly inadequate to their importance. When, however, they are viewed with steady observation, and learning and devotion lend us their aid in pursuing the contemplation, these facts, which occupy so small a space in the narrative, expand into broad tracks of doctrine, forming the foundation of the system.

In treating of subjects like these, the wisdom, piety, and erudition of our author shine with conspicuous lustre. He looks to the deepest groundwork of divine philosophy. Imbued with a solemn sense of the Almighty's attributes—of his eternal love, power, knowledge, as displayed in the creation, he treats of the mysteries of the Christian dispensation as one entering the recesses of a glorious temple, after having long contemplated, with awe and admiration, the beauty of the outward architecture. He shows that reasons for the rites alluded to may be found in the ordinary proceed-

ing of Providence, and that their utility may be demonstrated by allowed analogies and general principles. Then collecting the reflections, the arguments and criticisms of the fathers of theology, he proves from the whole, how intimate a connexion exists between Christ's sacramental obedience and our own justification and hope of glory; inculcating thereby a lesson of incalculable value on the right method of studying the gospel history, and pressing upon the reader's conscience most powerful reasons for love and resignation to the divine will.

The dissertations on the general topics of meditation, obedience, fasting, and others of like nature, are but an expansion of the sacred text. Christians require to be continually admonished on the necessity of a careful discipline. Our Lord himself had trials proportionable to his strength and dignity. Superior to ordinary circumstances, the malice of Satan prepared others, which bore some appearance of being fitted to subdue his constancy. To meet these by the power which he possessed, required the direction of that power to its proper ends; the right disciplining of the power, the collected and ever-ready application of wisdom, knowledge, and a sanctified will to new and strange occasions. The man Christ Jesus could not dispense with thought, foresight, the exercises of self-command, the fortifying of resolution by the comparative view of good and evil. Therefore it

was that he retired to pray; that he fasted; that he had to struggle with himself till the struggle became an agonized resignation; and in all this he exhibited both the necessity and the force of an holy discipline. Had not retirement and prayer been required for the overcoming of evil, Christ would have awaited the approach of danger without an extraordinary preparation. Whatever he did in these instances was demanded of him by the nature he had assumed; and his example is a law set forth in the clearest language of love and wisdom.

On no subject has greater difference of opinion existed than on the nature of religious discipline. In some ages doctrine has been almost lost sight of in the eager desire of churchmen to establish rules of penance and mortification. Practical morality even has dwindled into a shadow under the broad wing of formal discipline. In other periods no heed whatever has been taken of the subject: the bands of discipline have been not merely loosened, they have been broken and thrown away. 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,' has every where resounded; and men have resolved to own no other law but their will and their own notions of expediency. That there is little wisdom in this appears from the plain fact, that an undisciplined will is the worst guide or master we can have; and that, if it ref

chastised by wholesome rules, it is not in a position to decide on what course it is best or wisest to adopt. Of so much consequence is this matter, that the greatest masters of wisdom have always their own principles for self-guidance, and desired that these should be considered subsidiary to the eternal laws of moral rectitude. These principles have been expounded sometimes in short sentences, at others in maxims, or formal discourses. The treatises of our author partake of the value of whatever has been taught by any of these methods. They are in accordance with the experience of ages ; but experience is exhibited as taught by a wisdom surer and more universal than its own. Over that which was formerly in darkness, light is thrown from its purest fountains : that which deviates from the straight line of duty, a rule is laid which shows the exact degree of deviation ; and the sentiment which, though formerly useful and amiable according to its extent, seems now to languish for want of a stronger, healthier spirit, is confirmed by new appeals to the sanctions of a purging goodness.

In these dissertations, moreover, the nature of the moral and religious discipline is described in a manner which enables the reader to make it a matter of personal application. Rules technically stated, and appealing dogmatically to the human passions, rouse up all its pride and selfishness ; but when presented through the medium of divine love, they

remove prejudices, and then bear upon the conscience with all the force of heavenly admonitions. Our author keeps this carefully in sight. He proves the necessity of discipline by arguments of paternal kindness ; and while the Christian sees in every page evidence of his Saviour's holiness, the philosopher and moralist cannot fail of perceiving, that every rule laid down is of infinite importance to the advancement of our common enlightenment and happiness.

The grandeur of a theme like this is only to be equalled by the variety of its parts and relations. It is calculated above all others to set forth proofs of the harmony existing between evangelical doctrine and the principles of sound morality. He who gave the gospel to mankind displayed a character so unspotted in holiness, that no imagination, however vivid, can add to the brightness of its lustre. View this noble character in its several elements, and each is found to exhibit the same perfection of purity. Seek to imitate it : be abashed at the attempt ; filled with confusion at the discovery that every experiment is likely to be a failure. Inquire the cause, and it is found, that this divine teacher has declared, that the power of following his example depends entirely upon our believing in his word, and becoming sanctified by his Spirit.

To exhibit doctrine, so as to show its origin in

God's eternal holiness, and to teach morality so as to make the desire of faith in God more practical and lively, is the grand triumph of Christian instruction. The spiritual contemplation of the Saviour himself is the only sure means whereby this noble end can be attained; but every help to such a consummation of mental exercise is of value, and when it is afforded by a witness to the truth, who has sought to give light, because he prized and loved it in his own heart, we may well congratulate ourselves on its possession, and seek how it may best be employed to our comfort and advancement.

It is not, however, by the simple enunciation of a doctrine that faith is engendered: nor is it by the persuasions of a moralist, or the ingenuity and force of a proverb, that the heart can be converted. 'The law was a schoolmaster:' it wrought by rules and ordinances, and a wall was built on either side of the path to be trodden. The gospel confers a dignity incompatible with this severity of precept; and he who receives it is expected to be of sufficient strength, stature, and knowledge, according to the measurements of the Spirit, to be treated as a being set free from the trammels of his childhood. To instruct such a being,—to fit him for his improved condition, and enable him to employ his rich inheritance aright,—is a task wholly unlike to that of mere legal teaching. The scribes of old, however learned and ingenious, could never, with-

out a most complete inward conversion, have become instructors of Christ's disciples. They could have formed no idea of the condition of either the wants or the difficulties of the man of whom it might be said, 'The law of the spirit of life hath made him free from the law of sin and death.'

This it is which makes practical theology a branch of literature so difficult as well as important. When God speaks by his Spirit to the hearts of men, the appeal is direct; but though direct, it reaches every tortuous passage of our perverted nature; addresses every passion, and satisfies every doubt, however various its origin. When man addresses his fellow-man, he must appeal to the same complex nature; and he can only hope to succeed when he has taken care to furnish himself with arguments and appeals which may reach the enemy in whatever quarter he takes up his abode. And this appears to have been the object of our author in amassing such a vast store of learning, before he ventured on the composition of the present work. He knew mankind: he knew the sufficiency of the gospel for all purposes of good; and the lesson he has taught from its pages is as varied in its details and appeals, as those of the most eloquent of orators and poets.

H. S.

London, October 22, 1835.

THE
HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH
OF THE
HOLY JESUS,
BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE,
UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

PART II.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LADY,
THE LADY MARY,
COUNTESS DOWAGER OF NORTHAMPTON.

I AM now to present to your Honour part of that production of which your great love to sanctity was parent, and which was partly designed to satisfy those great appetites to virtue which have made you hugely apprehensive and forward to entertain any instrument whereby you may grow and increase in the service of God, and the communion and charity of holy people. Your Honour best knows in what soil the first design of these papers grew ; and but that the excellent personage who was their first root is transplanted for a time, that he may not have his righteous soul vexed with the impurer conversation of ill-minded men, I am confident you would have received the fruits of his abode to more excellent purposes. But because he was pleased to leave the managing of this to me, I hope your Honour will for his sake entertain what that rare person conceived, though I was left to the pains and danger of bringing forth ; and that it may dwell with you for its first relation, rather than be rejected for its appendant imperfections, which it contracted not in the fountain, but in the channels of its progress and emanation. Madam, I shall beg of God, that your Honour may receive as great increment of piety and ghostly strength in the reading this book, as I receive honour if you shall be pleased to accept and own this as a confession of your great worthiness, and a testimony of the service which ought to be paid to your Honour by,

Madam,

Your Honour's most humble
and most obliged servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

THE LIFE
OF OUR BLESSED
LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

SECTION I.

*Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony
of St. John, and a Miracle.*

1. AFTER that the Baptist, by a sign from heaven, was confirmed in spirit and understanding that Jesus was the Messias, he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifested to him: and first to the priests and Levites sent in legation from the Sanhedrim, he professed indefinitely, in answer to their question, that himself was 'not the Christ,'¹ nor 'Elias,' nor 'that prophet' whom they, by a special tradition, did expect to be revealed, they knew not when. And concerning himself definitely he said nothing, but that he was 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.'² "He it was who was then 'amongst them,'³ but 'not known;' a

¹ John, i. 20, 21.

² Ibid, verse 23.

³ Ibid, verse 26.

person of great dignity, to whom the Baptist was 'not worthy' to do the office of the lowest ministry;¹ 'who coming after John was preferred far before him';² who was to 'increase,' and the Baptist was to 'decrease';³ who did 'baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'⁴

2. This was the character of his personal prerogatives: but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus: and then, whenever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world: this is he.'⁵ Then he shows him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, with the same designation, and to another disciple with him; who both 'followed Jesus, and abode with him all night.'⁶ Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and then Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which signifies a stone. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathanael, and calls him to see. Thus, persons bred in a dark cell, upon their first ascent up to the chambers of light, all run staring upon the beauties of the sun, and call the partners of their darkness to communicate in their new and stranger revelation.

3. When Nathanael was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony to be truly honest, and full of holy simplicity, 'a true Israelite without guile.' And Nathanael, being overjoyed that he had found the Messiah, believing

¹ John, i. 27.

² Ibid, verse 15, 27, 30.

³ Ibid, iii. 30.

⁴ Matt. iii. 11.

⁵ John, i. 29, 36.

⁶ Ibid, verse 37, 39.

out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, and no suspicion, took that for a proof and verification of his person, which was very insufficient to confirm a doubt, or ratify a probability. But so we believe a story which we love, taking probabilities for demonstrations, and casual accidents for probabilities, and any thing that creates vehement presumptions; in which cases our guides are not our knowing faculties, but our affections, and if they be holy, God guides them into the right persuasions; as he does little birds to make rare nests, though they understand not the mystery of operation, nor the design and purpose of the action.

4. But Jesus took his will and forwardness of affections in so good part, that he promised him greater things: and this gave occasion to the first prophecy which was made by Jesus. For 'Jesus said unto him, because I said I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.' And then he prophesied that he should see 'heaven open, and the angel of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.'¹ But, being a doctor of the law, Christ chose him not at all to the college of apostles.

5. Much about the same time, there happened to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee, in the vicinage of his dwelling, where John the Evangelist is by some supposed to have been the bridegroom: (but of this there is no certainty:) and thither Jesus being with his mother invited, he went to do civility to the persons espoused, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. The persons then married, were but of indifferent fortunes, richer in

¹ S. Aug. tra. xvii. c. i. in Joan.

love of neighbours than in the fulness of rich possessions; they had more company than wine. For the master of the feast (whom, according to the order and piety of the nation, they chose from the order of priests to be the president of the feast, by the reverence of his person to restrain all inordination, by his discretion to govern and order the circumstances, by his religious knowledge to direct the solemnities of marriage, and to retain all the persons and actions in the bounds of prudence and modesty) complained to the bridegroom, that the guests wanted wine.

6. As soon as the holy virgin-mother had notice of the want, out of charity, that uses to be employed in supplying even the minutest and smallest articles of necessity, as well as the clamorous importunity of extremities and great indigencies, she complained to her son, by an indefinite address; not desiring him to make supply, for she knew not how he should; but either, out of an habitual commiseration, she complained without hoping for remedy; or else she looked on him who was the fountain of holiness and of plenty, as expecting a derivation from him either of discourses or miracles. But Jesus answered her, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.' By this answer, intending no denial to the purpose of his mother's intimation, to whom he always bore a religious and pious reverence; but to signify, that he was not yet entered into his period and years of miracles: and when he did, it must be not for respect of kindred or civil relations, but as it is a derivation of power from above, so it must be in pursuit of that service and design, which he had received in charge together with his power.

7. And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the ministers to do whatsoever he commanded. Jesus therefore bade them 'fill the water-pots,' which stood there for the use of frequent washings, which the Jews did use in all public meetings, for fear of touching pollutions, or contracting legal impurities; which they did with a curiousness next to superstition, washing the very beds and tables used at their feasts. The ministers 'filled them to the brim,' and, as they were commanded, 'drew out, and bare unto the governor of the feast;' who 'knew not of it,' till the miracle grew public, and, like light, showed itself. For while they wondered at the economy of that feast, in 'keeping the best wine till the last,' it grew apparent that he who was the Lord of the creatures, who in their first seeds have an obediential capacity to receive the impresses of what forms he pleases to imprint, could give new natures, and produce new qualities in that subject in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

8. 'This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee.' For all those miracles which are reported to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, feigned by trifling understandings, (who think to serve God with a well-meant lie,) and promoted by the credulity of such persons in whose hearts easiness, folly, and credulity are bound up and tied fast with silken thread, and easy softnesses of religious affections, not made severe by the rigours of wisdom and experience. This first miracle manifested his glory, and 'his disciples believed in him.'

AD. SECTION X.

*Considerations touching the Vocation of five Disciples,
and of the first Miracle of Jesus, done at Cana in
Galilee.*

1. As soon as ever John the Baptist was taught by the descent of the Holy Spirit that this was Jesus, he instantly preaches him to all that came near him. For the Holy Ghost was his commission and instruction : and now he was a minister evangelical, and taught all those that have the honour to be servants in so sacred employment, that they must not go till they be sent, nor speak till they be instructed, nor yet hold their peace when their commission is signed by the consignation of the Spirit in ordinary ministry. For ‘all power and all wisdom is from above,’ and in spiritual ministrations is a direct emanation from the Holy Spirit ; that, as no man is fit to speak the mysteries of godliness, be his person never so holy, unless he derive wisdom in order to such mysteries ; so, be he never so instructed by the assistance of art or infused knowledge, yet unless he also have derived power as well as skill, authority as well as knowledge from the same Spirit, he is not enabled to minister in public in ordinary ministrations. The Baptist was sent by a prime designation ‘to prepare the way’ to Jesus, and was instructed by the same Spirit, which had sanctified or consecrated him in his mother’s womb to this holy purpose.

2. When the Baptist had showed Jesus to Andrew and another disciple, they immediately followed him with the distances and fears of the first approach, and the infirmities of new converts : but

Jesus seeing them follow their first light, invited them to see the sun. For God loves to cherish infants in grace; and having sown the immortal seed in their hearts, if it takes root downwards, and springs out into the verdure of a leaf, he still waters it with the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit, in graces and new assistances, till it brings forth the fruits of a holy conversation. And God, who knows that infants have need of pleasant, and gentle, and frequent nutriment, hath given to them this comfort, that himself will take care of their first beginnings, and improve them to the strength of men, and give them the strengths of nature, and the wisdom of the Spirit, which ennoble men to excellencies and perfections. By the preaching of the Baptist they were brought to seek for Christ; and when they did, Christ found them, and brought them home, and made them 'stay all night with him;' which was more favour than they looked for. For God usually dispenses his mercies, that they may outrun our thoughts and expectations; and they are given in no proportion to us, but according to God's measures: he considering not what we are worthy of, but what is fit for him to give; he only requiring of us capacities to receive his favour, and fair reception and entertainment of his graces.

3. When Andrew had found Jesus, he calls his brother Simon to be partaker of his joys, which, as it happens in accidents of greatest pleasure, cannot be contained within the limits of the possessor's thoughts. But this calling of Peter was not to a beholding, but to a participation of his felicities: for he is strangely covetous who would enjoy the sun, or the air, or the sea alone: here was treasure for him and all the world; and by lighting his

brother Simon's taper, he made his own light the greater and more glorious. And this is the nature of grace, to be diffusive of its own excellencies; for here no envy can inhabit: the proper and personal ends of holy persons in the contract and transmissions of grace are increased by the participation and communion of others. For our prayers are more effectual, our aids increased, our encouragement and examples more prevalent, God more honoured, and the rewards of glory have accidental advantages, by the superaddition of every new saint and beatified person; the members of the mystical body, when they have received nutriment from God and his only Son, supplying to each other the same which themselves received, and live on, in the communion of saints. Every new star gilds the firmament, and increases its first glories: and those who are instruments of the conversion of others, shall not only introduce new beauties, but when themselves 'shine like the stars in glory,' they shall have some reflections from the light of others, to whose fixing in the orb of heaven themselves have been instrumental. And this consideration is not only of use in the exaltations of the dignity apostolical and clerical, but for the enkindling even of private charities; who may do well to promote others' interests of piety, in which themselves also have some concernment.

4. These disciples asked of Christ where he dwelt: Jesus answered, 'Come and see.' It was an answer very expressive of our duty in this instance. It is not enough for us to understand where Christ inhabits, or where he is to be found; for our understandings may follow him afar off, and we receive no satisfaction unless it be to curiosity: but we

must go where he is, eat of his meat, wash in his lavatory, rest on his beds, and dwell with him. For the holy Jesus hath no kind influence upon those who stand at distance, save only the affections of a loadstone, apt to draw them nigher, that he may transmit his virtues by union and confederations: but if they persist in a sullen distance, they shall learn his glories as Dives understood the peace of Lazarus, of which he was never to participate. Although 'the Son of man hath not where to lay his head,' yet he hath many houses where to convey his graces; he hath nothing to cover his own, but he hath enough to sanctify ours: and as he dwelt in such houses which the charity of good people then afforded for his entertainment so now he loves to abide in places which the religion of his servants hath vowed to his honour, and the advantages of evangelical ministrations. Thither we must come to him, or any where else where we may enjoy him. He is to be found in a church, in his ordinances, in the communion of saints, in every religious duty, in the heart of every holy person: and if we go to him by the addresses of religion in holy places, by the ministry of holy rites, by charity, by the adherences of faith, and hope, and other combining graces, the graces of union and society, or prepare a lodging for him within us, that he may come to us; then shall we see such glories and interior beauties, which none know but they that dwell with him. The secrets of spiritual benediction are understood only by them to whom they are conveyed, even to the children of his house. 'Come and see.'

5. St. Andrew was first called, and that by Christ immediately; his brother Simon next, and that by

Andrew: but yet Jesus changed Simon's name, and not the other's; and by this change designed him to an eminency of office, at least, in signification, principally above his brother, or else separately and distinctly from him; to show that these graces and favours which do not immediately co-operate to eternity, but are gifts and offices, or impresses of authority, are given to men irregularly, and without any order of predisponent causes, or probabilities on our part, but are issues of absolute predestination; and as they have efficacy from those reasons which God conceals, so they have some purposes as concealed as their causes: only if God pleases to make us vessels of fair employment and of great capacity, we shall bear a greater burden, and are bound to glorify God with special offices. But as these exterior and ineffective graces are given upon the same good will of God which made this matter to be a human body, when, if God had so pleased, it was capable of being made a fungus or a sponge; so they are given to us with the same intentions as are our souls, that we might glorify God in the distinct capacity of grace, as before of a reasonable nature. And besides that it teaches us to magnify God's free mercy, so it removes every such exalted person from being an object of envy to others, or from pleasing himself in vainer opinions: for God hath made him of such an employment as freely and voluntary as he hath made him a man, and he no more co-operated to this grace than to his own creation; and may as well admire himself for being born in Italy, or from rich parents, or for having two hands or two feet, as for having received such a designation extraordinary. But these things are never instruments of reputation among severe

understandings, and never but in the sottish and unmanly apprehensions of the vulgar. Only this, when God hath imprinted an authority upon a person, although the man hath nothing to please himself withal but God's grace, yet others are to pay the duty which that impression demands : which duty, because it rappsports to God, and touches not the man, but as it passes through him to the fountain of authority and grace, it extinguishes all pretences of opinion and pride.

6. When Jesus espied Nathanael (who also had been called by the first disciples) coming towards him, he gave him an excellent character, calling him ' a true Israelite, in whom was no guile,' and admitted him amongst the first disciples of the institution : by this character in one of the first of his scholars hallowing simplicity of spirit, and receiving it into his discipline, that it might now become a virtue and duty evangelical. For although it concerns us as a Christian duty to be prudent, yet the prudence of Christianity is a duty of spiritual effect, and in instances of religion with no other purposes than to avoid giving offence to those that are without and within ; that we cause no disreputation to Christianity ; that we do nothing that may encourage enemies to religion ; and that those that are within the communion and obedience of the church, may not suffer as great inconveniences by the indiscreet conduct of religious actions, as by direct temptations to a sin. These are the purposes of private prudence, to which in a greater measure, and upon more variety of rules the governors of churches are obliged. But that which Christian simplicity prohibits is, the mixing arts and unhandsome means for the purchase of our

ends ; witty counsels that are underminings of our neighbour, destroying his just interest to serve our own, stratagems to deceive, infinite and insignificant answers with fraudulent design, unjust and unlawful concealment of our purposes, fallacious promises and false pretences, flattery, and unjust and unreasonable praise, saying one thing and meaning the contrary, pretending religion to secular designs, breaking faith, taking false oaths, and such other instruments of human purposes framed by the devil, and sent into the world to be perfected by man. Christian simplicity speaks nothing but its thoughts ; and when it concerns prudence that a thought or purpose should be concealed, it concerns simplicity that silence be its cover, and not a false vizard ; it rather suffers inconvenience than a lie : it destroys no man's right, though it be inconsistent with my advantages ; it reproves freely, palliates no man's wickedness ; it intends what it ought, and does what is bidden, and uses courses regular and just, sneaks not in corners, and walks always in the eye of God, and the face of the world.

7. Jesus told Nathanael that he knew him, when he saw him under the fig-tree : and Nathanael took that to be probation sufficient that he was the Messiah ; and believed rightly upon an insufficient motive. Which because Jesus did accept, it gives testimony to us, that however faith be produced, by means regular or by arguments incompetent, whether it be proved or not proved, whether by chance or deliberation, whether wisely or by occasion, so that faith be produced by the instrument, and love by faith, God's work is done, and so is ours. For if St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by the envy of peevish persons,

certainly God will not reject an excellent product because it came from a weak and sickly parent. And he that brings good out of evil, and rejoices in that good, having first triumphed upon the evil, will certainly take delight in the faith of the most ignorant persons, which his own grace hath produced out of innocent, though insufficient, beginnings. It was folly in Naaman to refuse to be cured, because he was to recover only by washing in Jordan. The more incompetent the means is, the greater is the glory of God, who hath produced waters from a rock, and fire from the collision of a sponge and wool: and it is certain the end, unless it be in products merely natural, does not take its estimate and degrees from the external means. Grace does miracles, and the productions of the Spirit, in respect of its instruments, are equivocal, extraordinary, and supernatural; and ignorant persons believe as strongly, though they know not why, and love God as heartily as greater spirits and more excellent understandings: and when God pleases, or if he sees it expedient, he will do to others as to Nathanael, give them greater arguments and better instruments for the confirmation and heightening of their faith, than they had for the first production.

8. When Jesus had chosen these few disciples to be witnesses of succeeding accidents, every one of which was to be a probation of his mission and divinity, he entered into the theatre of the world at a marriage-feast, which he now first hallowed to a sacramental signification, and made to become mysterious. He now began to choose his spouse out from the communities of the world, and did mean to endear her by unions ineffable and glori-

ous, and consign the sacrament by his blood, which he first gave in a secret representment, and afterwards in letter and apparent effusion. And although the holy Jesus did in his own person consecrate celibacy, and abstinence and chastity in his mother's; yet by his presence he also hallowed marriage, and made it honourable, not only in civil accounts and rites of heraldry, but in a spiritual sense, he having new sublimed it, by making it a sacramental representment of the union of Christ and his spouse, the church. And all married persons should do well to remember what the conjugal society does represent, and not break the matrimonial bond, which is a mysterious ligament of Christ and his church: for whoever dissolves the sacredness of the mystery, and unhallows the vow by violence and impurity, he dissolves his relation to Christ. To break faith with a wife or husband is a divorce from Jesus, and that is a separation from all possibilities of felicity. In the time of the Mosaical statutes, to violate marriage was to do injustice and dishonour, and a breach to the sanctions of nature, or the first constitutions: but two bands more are added in the gospel, to make marriage more sacred. For now our bodies are made 'temples of the Holy Ghost,' and the rite of marriage is made significant and sacramental, and every act of adultery is profanation and irreligion; it desecrates a temple, and deflours a mystery.

9. The married pair were holy, but poor, and they wanted wine; and the blessed virgin-mother, pitying the affront of the young man, complained to Jesus of the want; and Jesus gave her an answer which promised no satisfaction to her purposes. For now that Jesus had lived thirty years,

and done in person nothing answerable to his glorious birth, and the miraculous accidents of his person, she longed till the time came in which he was to manifest himself by actions as miraculous as the star of his birth. She knew, by the rejecting of his trade, and his going abroad, and probably by his own discourse to her, that the time was near; and the forwardness of her love and holy desires possibly might go some minutes before his own precise limit. However, Jesus answered to this purpose, to show that the work he was to do was done not to satisfy her importunity, which is not occasion enough for a miracle, but to prosecute the great work of divine designation: for in works spiritual and religious all exterior relation ceases. The world's order, and the manner of our nature, and the infirmities of our person, have produced societies, and they have been the parents of relation; and God hath tied them fast by the knots of duty, and made the duty the occasion and opportunities of reward: but in actions spiritual, in which we relate to God, our relations are founded upon the spirit; and therefore we must do our duties upon considerations separate and spiritual, but never suffer temporal relations to impede our religious duties. Christian charity is a higher thing than to be confined within the terms of dependence and correlation; and those endearments which leagues, or nature, or society have made, pass into spiritual, and, like stars in the presence of the sun, appear not when the heights of the spirit are in place.¹ Where duty hath prepared special instances, there we must, for religion's sake, promote them; but

¹ Συγγένεια γὰρ οικειοτέρα ἢ πρὸς δικαιοσύνην ἔ, πᾶσαν ἑλλαν ἀρετὴν ὁμιλία. Philo. in exposit. general.

even to our parents or our children the charities of religion ought to be greater than the affections of society. And though we are bound in all offices exterior to prefer our relatives before others, because that is made a duty; yet to purposes spiritual, all persons eminently holy put on the efficacy of the same relations, and pass a duty upon us of religious affections.

10. At the command of Jesus the water-pots were filled with water, and the water was by his divine power turned into wine; where the different economy of God and the world is highly observable: 'Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse;' but God not only turns the water into wine, but into such wine that the last draught is most pleasant. The world presents us with fair language, promising hopes, convenient fortunes, pompous honours; and these are the outsides of the bole: but when it is swallowed, these dissolve in the instant, and there remains bitterness, and the malignity of colocintida. Every sin smiles in the first address, and carries light in the face, and honey in the lip; but 'when we have well drunk, then comes that which is worse;' a whip with six strings, fears and terrors of conscience, and shame and displeasure, and a caltivate disposition, and diffidence in the day of death. But when, after the manner of the purifying of the Christians, we fill our water-pots with water, watering our couch with our tears, and moistening our cheeks with the perpetual distillations of repentance, then Christ turns our water into wine: first penitents, and then communicants; first waters of sorrow, and then the wine of the chalice; first the justification of correction, and then the

sanctifications of the sacrament, and the effects of the divine power, joy, and peace, and serenity, hopes full of confidence, and confidence without shame, and boldness without presumption. For Jesus 'keeps the best wine till the last;' not only because of the direct reservations of the highest joys till the nearer approaches of glory; but also because our relishes are higher after a long fruition than at the first essays: such being the nature of grace, that it increases in relish as it does in fruition, every part of grace being new duty and new reward.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu, who didst choose disciples to be witnesses of thy life and miracles, so adopting man into a participation of thy great employment of bringing us to heaven by the means of a holy doctrine, be pleased to give me thy grace, that I may love and revere their persons whom thou hast set over me, and follow their faith, and imitate their lives, while they imitate thee; and that I also, in my capacity and proportion, may do some of the meaner offices of spiritual building, by prayers, and by holy discourses, and fraternal correction, and friendly exhortations, doing advantages to such souls with whom I shall converse. And since thou wert pleased to enter upon the stage of the world with the commencement of mercy and a miracle, be pleased to visit my soul with thy miraculous grace, turn my water into wine, my natural desires into supernatural perfections, and let my sorrows be turned into joys, my sins into virtuous habits, the weaknesses of humanity into communications of the divine nature; that since thou keepest the best unto the last, I may, by thy assistance, grow from grace to grace, till thy gifts be turned to reward, and thy graces to participation of thy glory, O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of Faith.

1. NATHANAEL'S faith was produced by an argument not demonstrative, not certainly concluding: Christ knew him when he saw him first, and he believed him to be the Messias. His faith was excellent, whatever the argument was. And I believe a God, because the sun is a glorious body; or because of the variety of plants, or the fabric and rare contexture of a man's eye: I may as fully assent to the conclusion, as if my belief dwelt upon the demonstrations made by the prince of philosophers in the eight of his physics and twelve of his metaphysics. This I premise as an inlet into the consideration concerning the faith of ignorant persons: for if we consider upon what easy terms most of us now are Christians, we may possibly suspect that either faith hath but little excellence in it, or we but little faith, or that we are mistaken generally in its definition. For we are born of Christian parents, made Christians at ten days old, interrogated concerning the articles of our faith by way of anticipation, even then when we understand not the difference between the sun and a tallow-candle: from thence we are taught to say our catechism, as we are taught to speak, when we have no reason to judge, no discourse to discern, no arguments to contest against a proposition, in case we be catechized into false doctrine; and all that is put to us we believe infinitely, and without choice, as children use not to choose their language. And as our children are made Christians, just so are thousand others made Mahometans, with

the same necessity, the same facility. So that thus far there is little thanks due to us for believing the Christian creed : it was indifferent to us at first, and at last our education had so possessed us, and our interest, and our no temptation to the contrary, that as we were disposed into this condition by Providence, so we remain in it without praise or excellency. For as our beginnings are inevitable, so our progress is imperfect and insufficient ; and what we begun by education, we retain only by custom. And if we be instructed in some slighter arguments to maintain the sect or faction of our country religion, as it disturbs the unity of Christendom ; yet if we examine and consider the account upon what slight arguments we have taken up Christianity itself, (as that it is the religion of our country, or that our fathers before us were of the same faith, or because the priest bids us, and he is a good man, or for something else, but we know not what,) we must needs conclude it the good providence of God, not our choice, that made us Christians.

2. But if the question be, whether such a faith be in itself good and acceptable, that relies upon insufficient and unconvincing grounds ; I suppose this case of Nathanael will determine us : and when we consider that faith is an infused grace, if God pleases to behold his own glory in our weakness of understanding, it is but the same thing he does in the instances of his other graces. For as God enkindles charity upon variety of means and instruments, by a thought, by a chance, by a text of Scripture, by a natural tenderness, by the sight of a dying or a tormented beast ; so also he may

produce faith by arguments of a different quality and by issues of his providence he may engage us in such conditions, in which as our understanding is not great enough to choose the best, so neither is it furnished with powers to reject any proposition and to believe well is an effect of a singular predestination, and is a gift in order to a grace, and that grace is in order to salvation. But the insufficiency of an argument or disability to prove our religion is so far from disabling the goodness of an ignorant man's faith, that as it may be as strong as the faith of the greatest scholar, so it hath full as much excellency, not of nature, but in order to divine acceptance. For as he who believes only upon the stock of education made no election of his faith; so he who believes what is demonstrably proved, is forced by the demonstration to his choice. Neither of them did choose and both of them may equally love the article.

3. So that, since a small argument in a weak understanding does the same work that a strong argument in a more sober and learned, that is, it convinces and makes faith, and yet neither of them is matter of choice; if the thing believed be good and matter of duty or necessity, the faith is not rejected by God upon the weakness of the first nor accepted upon the strength of the latter principles. When we are once in, it will not be enquired by what entrance we passed thither: whether God leads us or drives us in, whether we come by discourse or by inspiration, by the guide of an angel or the conduct of Moses, whether we be born or made Christians, it is indifferent, so we be there where we should be; for this is but the gate of

duty, and the entrance to felicity. For thus far faith is but an act of the understanding, which is a natural faculty, serving indeed as an instrument to godliness, but of itself no part of it; and it is just like fire, producing its act inevitably, and burning as long as it can, without power to interrupt or suspend its action; and therefore we cannot be more pleasing to God for understanding rightly, than the fire is for burning clearly: which puts us evidently upon this consideration, that Christian faith, that glorious duty which gives to Christians a great degree of approximation to God by Jesus Christ, must have a great proportion of that ingredient which makes actions good or bad; that is, of choice and effect.

4. For the faith of a Christian hath more in it of the will than of the understanding. Faith is that great mark of distinction which separates and gives formality to the covenant of the gospel, which is a law of faith. The faith of a Christian is his religion; that is, it is that whole conformity to the institution or discipline of Jesus Christ which distinguishes him from the believers of false religions. And to be one of the faithful signifies the same with being a disciple; and that contains obedience as well as believing: for to the same sense are all those appellatives in Scripture; 'the faithful, brethren, believers, the saints, disciples;' all representing the duty of a Christian. A believer and a saint, or a holy person, is the same thing: brethren signifies charity, and believers, faith in the intellectual sense: the faithful and disciples signify both; for besides the consent to the proposition, the first of them is also used for perseverance and sanctity, and the greatest of charity

mixed with a confident faith, up to the height of martyrdom. 'Be faithful unto the death,' said the Holy Spirit, 'and I will give thee the crown of life.'¹ And when the apostles, by way of abbreviation, express all the body of Christian religion, they call it 'faith working by love;'² which also St. Paul, in a parallel place, calls 'a new creature:'³ it is 'a keeping the commandments of God.'⁴ That is the faith of a Christian, into whose definition charity is ingredient, whose sense is the same with keeping of God's commandments: so that if we define faith, we must first distinguish it. The faith of a natural person, or the faith of devils, is a mere believing a certain number of propositions upon a conviction of the understanding; but the faith of a Christian, the faith that justifies and saves him, is 'faith working by charity,' or 'faith keeping the commandments of God.'⁵ They are distinct faiths in order to different ends, and therefore of different constitution; and the instrument of distinction is charity or obedience.

5. And this great truth is clear in the perpetual testimony of holy Scripture. For Abraham is called the 'father of the faithful;' and yet our blessed Saviour told the Jews, that if they had been 'the sons of Abraham, they would have done the work of Abraham;'⁶ and therefore good works are by the apostle called the 'footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham.'⁷ For faith in every of its stages, at its first beginning, at its increment, at its greatest perfections, is a duty made up of the concurrence of the will and the understanding,

¹ Rev. ii. 10.

² Gal. v. 6.

³ Ib. vi. 15.

⁴ 1 Cor. vii. 19.

⁵ Gal. v. 6.

⁶ John, viii. 39.

⁷ Rom. iv. 12.

when it pretends to the divine acceptance:—faith and repentance begin the Christian course. ‘Repent and believe the gospel’ was the sum of the apostles’ sermons; and all the way after it is, ‘faith working by love.’ Repentance puts the first spirit and life into faith, and charity preserves it, and gives it nourishment and increase; itself also growing by a mutual supply of spirits and nutriment from faith. Whoever does heartily believe a resurrection and life eternal upon certain conditions, will certainly endeavour to acquire the promises by the purchase of obedience and observation of the conditions: for it is not in the nature or power of man directly to despise and reject so infinite a good. So that faith supplies charity with argument and maintenance, and charity supplies faith with life and motion: faith makes charity reasonable, and charity makes faith living and effectual. And therefore the old Greeks called faith and charity “a miraculous chariot,”¹ or yoke; they bear the burden of the Lord with an equal confederation: these are like Hippocrates’ twins, they live and die together. Indeed faith is the first-born of the twins; but they must come both at a birth, or else they die, being strangled at the gates of the womb. But if charity, like Jacob, lays hold upon his elder brother’s heel, it makes a timely and a prosperous birth, and gives certain title to the eternal promises. For let us give the right of primogeniture to faith, yet the blessing, yea, and the inheritance too, will at last fall to charity. Not that faith is disinherited, but that charity only enters into the possession. The na-

¹ *Θαυμαστήν ξυνωρίδα.*

ture of faith passes into the excellency of charity before they can be rewarded: and that both may have their estimate, that which justifies and saves us, keeps the name of faith, but doth not do the deed till it hath the nature of charity. For to think well, or to have a good opinion, or an excellent or a fortunate understanding, entitles us not to the love of God, and the consequent inheritance;¹ but to choose the ways of the Spirit, and to relinquish the paths of darkness, this is the way of the kingdom, and the purpose of the gospel, and the proper work of faith.

6. And if we consider upon what stock faith itself is instrumental and operative of salvation, we shall find it is in itself acceptable, because it is a duty and commanded: and therefore it is an act of obedience, a work of the gospel, a submitting the understanding, a denying the affections, a laying aside all interests, and a bringing our thoughts under the obedience of Christ. This the apostle calls 'the obedience of faith:'² and it is of the same condition and constitution with other graces, all which equally relate to Christ, and are as firm instruments of union, and are washed by the blood of Christ, and are sanctified by his death, and apprehend him in their capacity and degrees, some higher and some not so high. But hope and charity apprehend Christ in a measure and proportion greater than faith, when it distinguishes from

¹ Τὸ ἀγαθὸς μὲν εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἢ κακὸς, ὁ Θεὸς ἐκ ἐν τῇ γνώσει ἔθῃκε γινωσκομένων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ αἰρέτει τῶν ἀφαιμένων. Just. M. Resp. ad orthod.—“God does not regard us as good or evil by our knowledge of things to be known; but by our choice of things which ought to be chosen.” ἑδὲν κέρδος ὑγιᾶς πίσεως, πῆς πολιτείας διεφθαρμένης. Chry. l. 4. de Sacerd.

² Rom. xvi. 26.

them. So that if faith does the work of justification, as it is a mere relation to Christ, then so also does hope and charity : or if these are duties and good works, so also is faith. And they all being alike commanded in order to the same end, and encouraged by the same reward, are also accepted upon the same stock ; which is, that they are acts of obedience and relation too : they obey Christ, and lay hold upon Christ's merits, and are but several instances of the great duty of a Christian, but the actions of several faculties of the new creature. But because faith is the beginning grace, and hath influence and causality in the production of the other, therefore all the other, as they are united in duty, are also united in their title and appellative : they are all called by the name of faith, because they are parts of faith, as faith is taken in the larger sense : and when it is taken in the strictest and distinguishing sense, they are effects and proper products by way of natural emanation.

7. That a good life is the genuine and true-born issue of faith, no man questions that knows himself the disciple of the holy Jesus ; but that obedience is the same thing with faith,¹ and that all Christian graces are parts of its bulk and constitution, is also the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the grammar of Scripture, making faith and obedience to be terms coincident and expressive of

¹ *Fides* (authore Cicerone) est firma opinio, et est fida mandatorum executio. Dicta est autem fides (ut ait idem Cicero de Officiis) à *fio*, quòd id fieri debeat quod dictum et promissum est. —“ ‘Faith,’ says Cicero, ‘is a firm opinion, and it is the faithful execution of commands. The word,’ he says, in his Offices, ‘is derived from *fio*, to become, because that ought to be done which has been said and promised.’ ”

each other: for faith is not a single star, but a constellation, a chain of graces, called by St. Paul 'the power of God unto salvation to every believer;' that is, faith is all that great instrument by which God intends to bring us to heaven; and he give this reason: 'In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith,' for 'it is written, the just shall live by faith.' Which discourse makes faith to be a course of sanctity and holy habits, a continuation of a Christian's duty, such a duty as not only gives the first breach, but by which a man lives the life of grace. 'The just shall live by faith;' that is, such a faith as grows from step to step, till the whole righteousness of God be fulfilled in it. 'From faith to faith,' saith the apostle; which St. Austin expounds, from faith believing, to faith obeying; from imperfect faith, to faith made perfect by the animation of charity; 'that he who is justified may be justified still.' For as there are several degrees and parts of justification, so there are several degrees of faith answerable to it; that in all senses it may be true, that 'by faith we are justified,' and 'by faith we live,' and 'by faith we are saved.' For if we proceed 'from faith to faith,' from believing to obeying, from faith in the understanding to faith in the will, from faith barely assenting to the revelations of God to faith obeying the commandments of God, from the body of faith to the soul of faith; that is, to faith formed and made alive by charity; then we shall proceed from justification to justifica-

¹ Rom. i. 16, 17.

² Ex fide annunciantium evangelium in fidem obedientium evangelio. S. Aug.—"From the faith of those announcing the gospel to the faith of those obeying the gospel."

tion; that is, from remission of sins to become the sons of God; and at last to an actual possession of those glories to which we were here consigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

8. And in this sense the holy Jesus is called by the apostle 'the author and finisher of our faith.'¹ He is the principle, and he is the promoter; he begins our faith in revelations, and perfects it in commandments; he leads us by the assent of our understanding, and finishes the work of his grace by a holy life: which St. Paul there expresses by its several constituent parts; as, 'laying aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets us,'² and 'running with patience the race that is set before us, resisting unto blood, striving against sin:'³ for in these things Jesus is therefore made our example, because he is the author and finisher of our faith: without these faith is imperfect. But the thing is something plainer yet, for St. James saith, that faith lives not but by charity;⁴ and the life or essence of a thing is certainly the better part of its constitution, as the soul is to a man. And if we mark the manner of his probation, it will come home to the main point; for he proves that Abraham's faith was therefore imputed to him for righteousness, because 'he was justified by works:'⁵ 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up his son?'⁶ and 'the Scripture was fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness;'⁷ for 'faith wrought with his works, and made his faith perfect.' It was a dead and imperfect faith, unless

¹ Hebrews, xii. 2.

² Ibid, verse 1.

³ Ibid, verse 4.

⁴ Jam. ii. 20, 26.

⁵ Ibid, verse 22.

⁶ Ibid, verse 23.

⁷ Ibid, verse 22.

obedience gave it being, and all its integral or essential parts. So that faith and charity, in the sense of a Christian, are but one duty, as the understanding and the will are but one reasonable soul; only they produce several actions in order to one another, which are but divers operations, and the same spirit.

9. Thus St. Paul, describing the faith of the Thessalonians, calls it that whereby they turned from idols, and whereby they served the living God:¹ and the faith of the patriarchs believed the world's creation, received the promises, did miracles, wrought righteousness, and did and suffered so many things as make up the integrity of a holy life.² And therefore disobedience and unrighteousness is called want of faith;³ and heresy, which is opposed to faith, is a work of the flesh,⁴ because faith itself is a work of righteousness. And that I may enumerate no more particulars, the thing is so known, that the word ἀπειθεῖα,⁵ which in propriety of language signifies mispersuasion or infidelity, is rendered disobedience; and the not providing for our families is an act of infidelity; by the same reason and analogy that obedience or charity and a holy life are the duties of a Christian, of a justifying faith. And although, in the natural or philosophical sense, faith and charity are distinct habits; yet in the sense of a Christian and the signification of duty they are the same: for we cannot believe aright, as believing is in the commandment, unless we live aright; for our faith is put upon the account just as it is made precious

¹ 1 Thess. i. 8, 9.

² Heb. xi. per totum.

³ Col. iii. 6; 2 Thess. iii. 2.

⁴ Gal. v. 20.

⁵ Eph. ii. 2, and v. 6; 1 Tim. v. 8.

by charity; according to that rare saying of St. Bartholomew, recorded by the supposed St. Denys, 'Charity is the greatest and the least theology.'¹ All our faith, that is, all our religion, is completed in the duties of universal charity: as our charity or our manner of living is, so is our faith. If our life be unholy, it may be the faith of devils, but not the faith of Christians; for this is the difference:—

10. The faith of the devils hath more of the understanding in it, the faith of Christians more of the will: the devils in their faith have better discourse, the Christians better affections; they in their faith have better arguments, we more charity. So that charity or a good life is so necessary an ingredient in the definition of a Christian's faith, that we have nothing else to distinguish it from the faith of devils; and we need no trial of our faith but the examination of our lives. If you 'keep the commandments of God,'² then have you the faith of Jesus; (they are immediate in St. John's expression;) but if you be 'importune and ungodly,' you are in St. Paul's list, amongst them that have no faith.³ Every vice that rules amongst us, and sullies the fair beauty of our souls, is a conviction of infidelity.

11. For it was the faith of Moses that made him despise the riches of Egypt; the faith of Joshua, that made him valiant; the faith of Joseph, that made him chaste; Abraham's faith made him obedient; St. Mary Magdalen's faith made her penitent; and the faith of St. Paul made him travel so

¹ Ἡ ἀγάπη θεολογία πολλή ἐ ἐλαχίστη, f. l. de Myst. Theol.

² Apoc. xiv. 12.

³ 2 Thess. iii. 2.

far, and suffer so much, till he became a prodigy both of zeal and patience. Faith is a catholicon, and cures all the distemperatures of the soul: it 'overcomes the world,'¹ saith St. John; 'it works righteousness,'² saith St. Paul; it 'purifies the heart,'³ saith St. Peter; 'it works miracles,' saith our blessed Saviour: miracles in grace always, as it did miracles in nature at its first publication. And whatsoever is good, if it be a grace, it is an act of faith; if it be a reward, it is the fruit of faith. So that as all the actions of men are but the productions of the soul, so are all the actions of the new man the effects of faith: for faith is the life of Christianity, and a good life is the life of faith.

12. Upon the grounds of this discourse we may understand the sense of that question of our blessed Saviour, 'When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on earth?'⁴ Truly just so much as he finds charity and holy living, and no more. For then only we can be confident that 'faith is not failed from among the children of men,' when we feel the heats of the primitive charity return, and the calentures of the first old devotion are renewed; when it shall be accounted honourable to be a servant of Christ, and a shame to commit a sin: then, and then only, our churches shall be assemblies of the faithful, and the kingdoms of the world Christian countries. But so long as it is notorious that we have made Christian religion another thing than what the holy Jesus designed it to be; when it does not make us live good lives, but itself is made a pretence to all manner of impiety, a stragem to serve ends, the ends of covetousness, of

¹ 1 John, v. 4.

² Heb. xi. 33.

³ Acts, xv. 9.

⁴ Luke, xviii. 8.

ambition and revenge ; when the Christian charity ends in killing one another for conscience-sake, so that faith is made to cut the throat of charity, and our faith kills more than our charity preserves ; when the humility of a Christian hath indeed a name amongst us, but it is like a mute person, talked of only, while ambition and rebellion, pride and scorn, self-seeking and proud undertakings, transact most of the great affairs of Christendom ; when the custody of our senses is to no other purposes but that no opportunity of pleasing them pass away ; when our oaths are like the fringes of our discourses, going round about them, as if they were ornaments and trimmings ; when our blasphemies, profanation, sacrilege, and irreligion are become scandalous to the very Turks and Jews ; while our lusts are always habitual, sometimes unnatural,¹ will any wise man think, that we believe those doctrines of humility and obedience, of chastity and charity, of temperance and justice, which the Saviour of the world made sacred by his sermon and example, or indeed any thing he either said or did, promised or threatened ? For is it possible, a man with his wits about him, and believing that he should certainly be damned (that is, be eternally tormented in body and soul, with torments greater than can be in this world) if he be a swearer, or liar, or drunkard, or cheats his neighbour, that this man should dare to do these things, to which the temptations are so small, in

¹ Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλείυσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται. St. Chrysost. ad Demetr.—
“Disbelief in the commandments is generally the consequence of a resistance to the commandments.”

which the delight is inconsiderable, and the satisfaction so none at all.

13. We see by the experience of the whole world that the belief of an honest man in a matter of a temporal advantage makes us do actions of such danger and difficulty, that half so much industry and sufferance would ascertain us into a possession of all the promises evangelical. Now let any man be asked, whether he had rather be rich or be saved, he will tell you, without all doubt, heaven is the better option by infinite degrees; for it cannot be that riches, or revenge, or lust should be directly preferred, that is, be thought more eligible than the glories of immortality. That therefore men neglect so great salvation, and so greedily run after the satisfaction of their baser appetites, can be attributed to nothing but want of faith: they do not heartily believe that Heaven is worth so much; there is upon them a stupidity of spirit, and their faith is dull, and its actions suspended, most commonly, and often interrupted, and it never enters into the will; so that the propositions are considered nakedly and precisely in themselves, but not as referring to us or our interests: there is nothing of faith in it, but so much as is the first and direct act of understanding; there is no consideration nor reflection upon the act, or upon the person, or upon the subject. So that even as it is seated in the understanding, our faith is commonly lame, mutilous, and imperfect; and therefore much more is it culpable, because it is destitute of all co-operation of the rational appetite.

14. But let us consider the power and efficacy of worldly belief. If a man believes that there is gold to be had in Peru for fetching, or pearls or rich

jewels in India for the exchange of trifles, he instantly, if he be in capacity, leaves the wife of his bosom, and the pretty delights of children, and his own security, and ventures into the dangers of waters and unknown seas, and freezings and calen- tures, thirst and hunger, pirates and shipwrecks, and hath within him a principle strong enough to answer all objections, because he believes that riches are desirable, and by such means likely to be had. Our blessed Saviour, comparing the gospel to 'a merchant-man that found a pearl of great price, and sold all to buy it,' hath brought this instance home to the present discourse: for if we did as verily believe that in heaven those great felicities which transcend all our apprehensions are certainly to be obtained by leaving our vices and lower desires, what can hinder us but we should at least do as much for obtaining those great felicities as for the lesser, if the belief were equal? For if any man thinks he may have them without holiness and justice and charity, then he wants faith; for he believes not the saying of St. Paul: 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God.'¹ If a man believes learning to be the only or chiefest ornament and beauty of souls, that which will ennoble him to a fair employment in his own time, and an honourable memory to succeeding ages; this if he believes heartily, it hath power to make him endure catarrhs, gouts, hypochondriacal passions, to read till his eyes almost fix in their orbs, to despise the pleasures of idleness or tedious sports, and to undervalue whatsoever does not co-operate to the end of his faith, the desire of learning. Why is the Italian

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

so abstemious in his drinkings, or the Helvetian so valiant in his fight, or so true to the prince that employs him, but that they believe it to be noble so to be? If they believed the same, and had the same honourable thoughts of other virtues, they also would be as national as these; for faith will do its proper work. And when the understanding is peremptorily and fully determined upon the persuasion of a proposition, if the will should then dissent and choose the contrary, it were unnatural and monstrous, and possibly no man ever does so: for that men do things without reason and against their conscience, is, because they have put out their light, and discourse their wills into the election of a sensible good, and want faith to believe truly all circumstances which are necessary by way of predisposition for choice of the intellectual.

15. But when men's faith is confident, their resolution and actions are in proportion. For thus the faith of Mahometans makes them to abstain from wine for ever: and therefore, if we had the Christian faith, we should much rather abstain from drunkenness for ever; it being an express rule apostolical, 'Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.'¹ The faith of the Circumcellians made them to run greedily to violent and horrid deaths as willingly as to a crown; for they thought it was the King's highway to martyrdom. And there was never any man zealous for his religion, and of an imperious bold faith, but he was also willing to die for it; and therefore also, by as much reason, to live in it, and to be a strict observer of its prescriptions. And the stories of the strict sanctity, and prodigious sufferings, and severe disciplines, and expensive religion,

¹ Ephes. v. 18.

and compliant and laborious charity of the primitive Christians, is abundant argument to convince us, that the faith of Christians is infinitely more fruitful and productive of its univocal and proper issues than the faith of heretics, or the false religions of misbelievers, or the persuasions of secular persons, or the spirit of antichrist. And therefore, when we see men serving their prince with such difficult and ambitious services, because they believe him able to reward them, though of his will they are not so certain, and yet so supinely negligent and incurious of their services to God, of whose power and will to reward us infinitely there is certainty absolute and irrespective, it is certain probation that we believe it not; for if we believe there is such a thing as heaven, and that every single man's portion of heaven is far better than all the wealth in the world, it is morally impossible we should prefer so little before so great profit.

16. I instance but once more. The faith of Abraham was instanced in the matter of confidence or trust in the divine promises; and he being the 'father of the faithful,' we must imitate his faith by a clear dereliction of ourselves and our own interests, and an entire confident relying upon the divine goodness in all cases of our needs or danger. Now this also is a trial of the verity of our faith, the excellency of our condition, and what title we have to the glorious names of *Christians*, and *faithful*, and *believers*. If our fathers, when we were in pupilage and minority, or a true and an able friend when we were in need, had made promises to supply our necessities, our confidence was so great that our care determined. It were also well that we were as confident of God, and as secure of the

event, when we had disposed ourselves to reception of the blessing, as we were of our friend or parents. We all profess that God is almighty, that all his promises are certain; and yet, when it comes to a pinch, we find that man to be more confident that hath ten thousand pounds in his purse, than he that reads God's promises over ten thousand times. "Men of a common spirit, (saith St. Chrysostom,) of an ordinary sanctity, will not steal, or kill, or lie, or commit adultery; but it requires a rare faith, and a sublimity of pious affections, to believe that God will work a deliverance which to me seems impossible." And indeed St. Chrysostom hit upon the right. He had need be a good man, and love God well, that puts his trust in him: for those we love we are most apt to trust. And although trust and confidence is sometimes founded upon experience, yet it is also begotten and increased by love, as often as by reason and discourse. And to this purpose it was excellently said by St. Basil, "that the knowledge which one man learneth of another is made perfect by continual use and exercise; but that which through the grace of God is ingrafted in the mind of man, is made absolute by justice, gentleness, and charity." So that if you are willing even in death not only to confess the articles, but in affliction and death to trust the promises; if in the lowest nakedness of poverty you can cherish yourselves with the expectation of God's promises and dispensation, being as confident of food and raiment, and deliverance or support, when all is in God's hand, as you are when it is in your own; if you can be cheerful in a storm, smile when the world frowns, be content in the midst of spiritual desertions and anguish of spirit, expecting all

should work together for the best, according to the promise; if you can strengthen yourselves in God when you are weakest, believe when you see no hope, and entertain no jealousies or suspicions of God, though you see nothing to make you confident; then, and then only you have faith, which in conjunction with its other parts is able to save your souls. For in this precise duty of trusting God there are the rays of hope, and great proportions of charity and resignation.

17. The sum is that pious and most Christian sentence of the author of the Ordinary Gloss: "To believe in God through Jesus Christ is, by believing to love him, to adhere to him, to be united to him by charity and obedience, and to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body in the communion of saints."¹ I conclude this with a collection of certain excellent words of St. Paul, highly to the present purpose: 'Examine yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.' Well, but how? 'Know you not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?'² There is the touchstone of faith. If Jesus Christ dwells in us, then we are true believers; if he does not, we are reprobates, we have no faith. But how shall we know whether Christ be in us or not? St. Paul tells us that too: 'If Christ be in you, the body is dead, by reason of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.'³ That is the Christian's mark, and the cha-

¹ *Credere in Deum est, credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire, et membris ejus incorporari.* Gloss. Ord. in Rom. iv.—"To believe in God is by believing to love him, by believing to choose him, by believing to go to him, and to be incorporated in his members."

² 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Rom. viii. 19.

racteristic of a true believer; a 'death unto sin,' and 'a living unto righteousness;' 'a mortified body,' and 'a quickened spirit.' This is plain enough, and by this we see what we must trust to. A man of a wicked life does in vain hope to be saved by his faith; for indeed his faith is but equivocal and dead, which as to his purpose is just none at all: and therefore let him no more deceive himself; for (that I may still use the words of St. Paul) 'this is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works:'¹ for such, and such only, in the great scrutiny for faith in the day of doom, shall have their portion in the bosom of 'faithful Abraham.'

THE PRAYER.

I.

O eternal God, fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal, let thy grace descend with a mighty power into my soul, beating down every strong hold and vainer imagination, and bringing every proud thought and my confident and ignorant understanding into the obedience of Jesus. Take from me all disobedience and refractoriness of spirit, all ambition, and private and baser interests: remove from me all prejudice and weakness of persuasion; that I may wholly resign my understanding to the persuasions of Christianity, acknowledging thee to be the principle of truth, and thy word the measure of knowledge, and thy laws the rule of my life, and thy promises the satisfaction of my hopes, and an union with thee to be the consummation of charity in the fruition of glory. Amen.

¹ Titus, iii.

II.

Holy Jesus, make me to acknowledge thee to be my Lord and Master, and myself a servant and disciple of thy holy discipline and institution: let me love to sit at thy feet, and suck in with my ears and heart the sweetness of thy holy sermons. Let my soul be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, with a peaceable and docile disposition. Give me great boldness in the public confession of thy name and the truth of thy gospel, in despite of all hostilities and temptations. And grant I may always remember that thy name is called upon me, and I may so behave myself, that I neither give scandal to others, nor cause disreputation to the honour of religion; but that thou mayest be glorified in me, and I by thy mercies, after a strict observance of all thy holy laws of Christianity. Amen.

III.

O holy and ever-blessed Spirit, let thy gracious influences be the perpetual guide of my rational faculties. Inspire me with wisdom and knowledge, spiritual understanding, and a holy faith; and sanctify my faith, that it may rise up to the confidence of hope, and the adherences of charity, and be fruitful in a holy conversation. Mortify in me all peevishness and pride of spirit, all heretical dispositions, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine; that when the eternal Son of God, the author and finisher of our faith, shall come to make scrutiny and an inquest for faith, I may receive the promises laid up for them that believe in the Lord Jesus, and wait for his coming in holiness and purity: to whom with the Father and Thee, O blessed Spirit, be all honour and eternal adoration paid, with all sanctity and joy and eucharist, now and for ever. Amen.

SECTION XI.

Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover the first time after his Manifestation, and what followed till the expiration of the office of John the Baptist.

1. IMMEDIATELY after this miracle, Jesus abode a few days in Capernaum, but because of the approach of the great feast of passover he ascended to Jerusalem. And the first public act of record that he did was, an act of holy zeal and religion in behalf of the honour of the temple. For divers merchants and exchangers of money made the temple to be the market and the bank, and brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice against the great paschal solemnity. At the sight of which, Jesus, being moved with zeal and indignation, 'made a whip of cords, and drave the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accounting tables, and commanded them that sold the doves to take them from thence.' For his anger was holy, and he would mingle no injury with it; and therefore the doves, which if let loose would be detrimental to the owners, he caused to be fairly removed: and published the religion of holy places, establishing their sacredness for ever by his first gospel-sermon that he made at Jerusalem. 'Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of merchandise;' for 'it shall be called a house of prayer to all nations.' And being required to give a 'sign' of his vocation, (for this, being an action like the religion of the zealots among the Jews, if it were not attested by something extraordinary, might be abused into an excess of liberty, he only

foretold the resurrection of his body, after three days' death, but he expressed it in the metaphor of the temple: 'Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days. He spake of the temple of his body,' and they understood him of the temple of Jerusalem: and it was never rightly construed, till it was accomplished

2. At this public convention of the Jewish nation Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messias, and persuaded many disciples, amongst whom was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation. He 'came by night to Jesus,' and affirmed himself to be convinced by the miracles which he had seen; for 'no man could do those miracles, except God be with him.' When Jesus perceived his understanding to be so far disposed, he began to instruct him in the great secret and mysteriousness of regeneration, telling him, "that every production is of the same nature and condition with its parent, 'from flesh comes flesh' and corruption, 'from the Spirit comes spirit' and life and immortality; and nothing from a principle of nature could arrive to a supernatural end; and therefore the only door to enter into the kingdom of God was 'water,' by the manuduction of 'the Spirit;' and by this regeneration we are put into a new capacity, of living a spiritual life in order to a spiritual and supernatural end."

3. This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus; but Jesus bade him 'not to wonder;' "for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's Spirit, and an issue of predestination. For 'the Spirit bloweth where it listeth,' and is as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and in the manner of production. And therefore

this doctrine was not to be estimated by any proportions to natural principles or experiments of sense, but to the secrets of a new metaphysic, and abstracted, separate speculations. Then Christ proceeds in his sermon, telling him there are yet higher things for him to apprehend and believe; for this, in respect of some other mysteriousness of of his gospel, was but as earth in comparison of heaven. Then he tells of his own descent from heaven, foretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption which he came to work for mankind: he preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity: he upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of a holy and corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, the confidence and serenity of the other." And this is the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest of mystery and speculation and abstracted senses of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his passion; all his other sermons being more practical.

4. From Jerusalem Jesus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to Christ upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There his disciples did receive all comers, and baptized them, (as John at the same time did,) and by that ceremony admitted them to the discipline and institution; according to the custom of the doctors and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars was the ceremony of their admission. As soon as John heard it, he acquitted himself in public by

renewing his former testimony concerning Jesus, affirming him to be the Messias; and now the time was come that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution: 'for Christ came from above, was above all;' and the sum of his doctrine was, 'that which he had heard and seen' from the Father; 'whom God sent,' to that purpose; to whom God 'had set his seal, that he was true;' who 'spake the words of God;' whom the 'Father loved, to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all things:' this was he, whose 'testimony the world received not.' And that they might know not only what person they slighted, but how great salvation also they neglected, he sums up all his sermons and finishes his mission with this saying, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.'

5. For now that the Baptist had fulfilled his office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and bring him to his reward upon this occasion. John, who had so learned to despise the world and all its exterior vanities and impertinent relations, did his duty justly, and so without respect of persons, that as he reprov'd the people for their prevarications, so he spared not Herod for his, but abstaining from all expresses of the 'spirit of scorn and asperity, mingling no discontents, interests, nor mutinous intimations with his sermons, he told Herod 'it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife:' for which sermon he felt the furies and malice of

¹ John, iii. 36.

a woman's spleen, was cast into prison, and about a year after was sacrificed to the scorn and pride of a lustful woman and her immodest daughter, being, at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching, beheaded by Herod's command; who would not retract his promise, because of his honour, and a rash vow he made in the gaiety of his lust and complacencies of his riotous dancings. His head was brought up in a dish, and made a festival-present to the young girl, (who gave it to her mother). A cruelty that was not known among the barbarisms of the worst of people, to mingle banquettings with blood and sights of death. An insolency and inhumanity for which the Roman orators accused Q. Flaminius of treason, because, to satisfy the wanton cruelty of Placentia, he caused a condemned slave to be killed at supper: and which had no precedent but in the furies of Marius, who caused the head of the consul Antonius to be brought up to him in his feasts, which he handled with much pleasure and insolency.¹

6. But God's judgments, which sleep not long, found out Herod, and marked him for a curse. For the wife of Herod, who was the daughter of Aretas, a king of Arabia Petræa, being repudiated by paction with Herodias, provoked her father to commence a war with Herod; who prevailed against Herod in a great battle, defeating his whole army, and forcing him to an inglorious flight. Which the Jews generally expounded to be a judgment on him for the unworthy and barbarous execution and murder of John the Baptist. God in his wisdom and severity making one sin to be the punishment of

¹ Senec. cont. lib. v. Livius, lib. xxxix. Plut. in Marcio.

another, and neither of them both to pass without the signature of a curse. And Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodias passing over a frozen lake, the ice broke, and she fell up to the neck in water, and her head was parted from her body by the violence of the fragments shook by the water, and its own fall, and so perished, God having fitted a judgment to the analogy and representment of her sin. Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramour, Herod, were banished to Lyons, in France, by decree of the Roman senate, where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably ;¹ so paying dearly for her triumphal scorn superadded to her crime of murder ; for when she saw the head of the Baptist, which her daughter Salome had presented to her in a charger, she thrust the tongue through with a needle, as Fulvia had formerly done to Cicero. But herself paid the charges of her triumph.

AD. SECT. XI.

Considerations upon the first Journey of the holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the merchants out of the Temple.

1. WHEN the feast came, and Jesus was ascended up to Jerusalem, the first place we find him in is the temple, where not only was the area and court of religion, but, by occasion of public conventions, the most opportune scene for transaction of his commission and his Father's business. And those Christians who have been religious and affectionate

¹ Jos. Ant. lib. xviii. c. vii. lib. i. hist. c. 20.

even in the circumstances of piety, have taken this for a precedent, and accounted it a good express of the regularity of their devotion and order of piety, at their first arrival to a city to pay their first visits to God, the next to his servant, the president of religious rites: first they went into the church and worshipped; then to the angel of the church, to the bishop, and begged his blessing. And having thus commenced with the auspiciousness of religion, they had better hopes their just affairs would succeed prosperously, which after the rites of Christian countries had thus been begun with devotion and religious order.

2. When the holy Jesus entered the temple, and espied a mart kept in the holy sept, a fair upon holy ground, he, who suffered no transportations of anger in matters and accidents temporal, was borne high with an ecstasy of zeal; and, according to the custom of the zealots of the nation, took upon him the office of a private infliction of punishment in the cause of God, which ought to be dearer to every single person than their own interest and reputation. What the exterminating angel did to Heliodorus, who came into the temple upon design of sacrilege, that the meekest Jesus did to them who came with acts of profanation; he whipped them forth. And as usually good laws spring from ill manners, and excellent sermons are occasioned by men's iniquities, now also our great Master upon this accident asserted the sacredness of holy places in the words of a prophet, which now he made a lesson evangelical: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer to all nations.'

3. The beasts and birds there sold were brought for sacrifice, and the banks of money were for the advantage of the people that came from far, that

their returns might be safe and easy, when they came to Jerusalem upon the employments of religion. But they were not yet fit for the temple. They who brought them thither purposed their own gain, and meant to pass them through an unholy usage, before they could be made *anathemata*, vows to God: and when religion is but the purpose at the second hand, it cannot hallow a lay design, and make it fit to become a religious ministry, much less sanctify an unlawful action. When Rachel stole her father's gods, though possibly she might do it in zeal against her father's superstition, yet it was occasion of a sad accident to herself; for the Jews say that Rachel died in childbirth of her second son, because of that imprecation of Jacob, 'With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live.' Saul pretended sacrifice, when he spared the fat cattle of Amalek; and Micah was zealous, when he made him an ephod and a teraphim, and meant to make himself an image for religion, when he stole his mother's money; but these are colours of religion, in which not only the world, but ourselves also are deceived by a latent purpose, which we are willing to cover with a remote design of religion, lest it should appear unhandsome in its own dressing. Thus some believe a covetousness allowable, if they greedily heap treasure with a purpose to build hospitals or colleges; and sinister acts of acquiring church-livings are not so soon condemned, if the design be to prefer an able person; and actions of revenge come near to piety, if it be to the ruin of an ungodly man; and indirect proceedings are made sacred, if they be

¹ Gen. xxxi. 32.

for the good of the holy cause. This is profaning the temple with beasts brought for sacrifices, and dishonours God, by making himself accessory to his own dishonour, as far as lies in them; for it disserves him with a pretence of religion. And but that our hearts are deceitful, we should easily perceive that the greatest business of the letter is written in postscript: the great pretence is the least purpose; and the latent covetousness or revenge, or the secular appendix, is the main engine, to which the end of religion is made but instrumental and pretended. But men when they sell a mule use to speak of the horse that begat him, not of the ass that bore him.

4. The holy Jesus made a whip of cords, to represent and to chastise the implications and enfoldings of sin and the cords of vanity. 1. There are some sins that of themselves are a whip of cords: those are the crying sins, that by their degree and malignity speak loud for vengeance; or such as have great disreputation, and are accounted the basest issues of a caitive disposition; or such which are unnatural and unusual; or which, by public observation, are marked with the signature of divine judgments. Such are murder, oppression of widows and orphans, detaining the labourer's hire, lusts against nature, parricide, treason, betraying a just trust in great instances and base manners, lying to a king, perjury in a priest. These carry Cain's mark upon them, or Judas's sting, or Manasses' sorrow, unless they be made impudent by the spirit of obduration. 2. But there are some sins that bear shame upon them, and are used as correctives of pride and vanity; and if they do their cure, they are converted into instruments of

good by the great power of the divine grace: but if the spirit of the man grows impudent and hardened against the shame, that which commonly follows is the worst string of the whip, a direct consignation to a reprobate spirit. 3. Other sins there are for the chastising of which Christ takes the whip into his own hand; and there is much need, when sins are the customs of a nation, and marked with no exterior disadvantage, or have such circumstances of encouragement, that they are unapt to disquiet a conscience, or make our beds uneasy, till the pillows be softened with penitential showers. In both these cases the condition of a sinner is sad and miserable: for 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God:' his hand is heavy, and his sword is sharp, and 'pierces to the dividing the marrow and the bones.' And he that considers the infinite distance between God and us, must tremble, when he remembers that he is to feel the issues of that anger, which he is not certain whether or no it will destroy him infinitely and eternally. 4. But if the whip be given into our hands, that we become executioners of the divine wrath, it is sometimes worse; for we seldom strike ourselves for emendation, but add sin to sin, till we perish miserably and inevitably. God scourges us often into repentance; but when a sin is the whip of another sin, the rod is put into our hands, who like blind men strike with a rude and undiscerning hand, and, because we love the punishment, do it without intermission or choice, and have no end but ruin.

5. When the holy Jesus had whipped the merchants in the temple, they took away all the instruments of their sin. For a judgment is usually

the commencement of repentance: love is the last of graces, and seldom at the beginning of a new life, but is reserved to the perfections and ripeness of a Christian. We begin in fear: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: when he smote them, then they turned, and enquired early after God:'¹ and afterwards the impresses of fear continue like a hedge of thorns about us, to restrain our dissolutions within the awfulness of the divine majesty, that it may preserve what was from the same principle begun. This principle of their emendation was from God, and therefore innocent and holy: and the very purpose of divine threatenings is, that upon them, as upon one of the great hinges, the piety of the greatest part of men should turn; and the effect was answerable, but so are not the actions of all those who follow this precedent in the tract of the letter. For indeed there have been some reformati^ons which have been so like this, that the greatest alteration which hath been made was, that they carried all things out of the temple, the money, and the tables, and the sacrifice; and the temple itself went at last. But these men's scourge is to follow after; and Christ, the prince of the catholic church, will provide one of his own contexture, more severe than the stripes which Heliodorus felt from the infliction of the exterminating angel. But the holy Spirit of God, by making provision against such a reformation, hath prophetically declared the aptnesses which are in pretences of religious alterations to degenerate into sacrilegious desires: 'Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?'² In this

¹ Psalm lxxviii. 33.

² Rom. ii. 22.

case there is no amendment, only one sin resigns to another, and the person still remains under its power and the same dominion.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, thou bright image of thy Father's glories, whose light did shine to all the world, when thy heart was inflamed with zeal and love of God and of religion, let a coal from thine altar, fanned with the wings of the holy dove, kindle in my soul such holy flames, that I may be zealous of thy honour and glory, forward in religious duties, earnest in their pursuit, prudent in their managing, ingenuous in my purposes, making my religion to serve no end but of thy glories, and the obtaining of thy promises: and so sanctify my soul and my body, that I may be a holy temple, fit and prepared for the inhabitation of thy ever-blessed Spirit; whom grant that I may never grieve by admitting any impure thing to desecrate the place, and unhallow the courts of his abode; but give me a pure soul in a chaste and healthful body, a spirit full of holy simplicity, and designs of great ingenuity, and perfect religion, that I may intend what thou commandest, and may with proper instruments prosecute what I so intend, and by thy aids may obtain the end of my labours, the rewards of obedience and holy living, even the society and inheritance of Jesus in the participation of the joys of thy temple, where thou dwellest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, O eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of the Religion of Holy Places.

1. THE holy Jesus brought a divine warrant for his zeal. The selling sacrifices, and the exchange of

money, and every lay employment, did violence and dishonour to the temple, which was hallowed to ecclesiastical ministeries, and set apart for offices of religion, for the use of holy things; for it was God's house: and so is every house by public designation separate for prayer or other uses of religion, it is God's house. ['My house:'] God had a propriety in it, and had set his mark on it, even his own name. And therefore it was, in the Jews idiom of speech, called 'the mountain of the Lord's house,' and 'the house of the Lord,' by David frequently. God had put his name into all places appointed for solemn worship. 'In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and bless thee.'¹ For God, who was never visible to mortal eye, was pleased to make himself presential by substitution of his name; that is, in certain places he hath appointed that his name shall be called upon, and by promising and imparting such blessings which he hath made consequent to the invocation of his name, hath made such places to be a certain determination of some special manner of his presence. For God's name is not a distinct thing, from himself, not an idea, and it cannot be put into a place in literal signification; the expression is to be resolved into some other sense. God's name is that whereby he is known, by which he is invoked, that which is the most immediate publication of his essence, nearer than which we cannot go unto him: and because God is essentially present in all places, when he makes himself present in one place more than another, it cannot be understood to any other purpose, but that in such places he

¹ Exod. xx. 24.

gives special blessings and graces, or that in those places he appoints his name, that is, himself, specially to be invoked.

2. So that when God puts his name in any place by a special manner, it signifies that there himself is in that manner; but in separate and hallowed places God hath expressed that he puts his name with a purpose it should be called upon: therefore, in plain signification it is thus; in consecrate places God himself is present to be invoked; that is, there he is most delighted to hear the prayers we make to him. For all the expressions of Scripture, of 'God's house,' 'the tabernacle of God,' 'God's dwelling, putting his name there,' 'his sanctuary,' are resolved into that saying of God to Solomon, who prayed that he would hear the prayers of necessitous people in that place; God granting the request expressed it thus, 'I have sanctified the house which thou hast built;' that is, the house which thou hast designed for my worship, I have designed for your blessing; what you have dedicated, I have accepted; what you have consecrated, I have hallowed; I have taken it to the same purpose to which your desires and designation pretended it in your first purposes and expense. So that since the purpose of man in separating places of worship is, that thither, by order and with convenience and in communities of men, God may be worshipped and prayed unto. God having declared that he accepts of such separate places to the same purpose, says, that there he will be called upon, that such places shall be places of

¹ 1 Kings, ix. 3.

advantage to our devotions, in respect of human order, and divine acceptance and benediction.

3. Now, these are therefore God's houses, because they were given by men, and accepted by God, for the service of God and the offices of religion. And this is not the effect or result of any distinct covenant God hath made with man in any period of the world, but it is merely a favour of God, either hearing the prayer of dedication, or complying with human order or necessities. For there is nothing in the covenant of Moses's law that, by virtue of special stipulation, makes the assignment of a house for the service of God to be proper to Moses's ritual. Not only because God had memorial determinations of this manner of his presence before Moses's law, as at Bethel, where Jacob laid the first stone of the church, (nothing but a stone was God's memorial,) and the beginning and first rudiment of a temple; but also because, after Moses's law was given, as long as the nation was ambulatory, these were their places and instruments of religion. And although the ark was not confined to a place till Solomon's time, yet God was pleased in that manner to confine himself to the ark; and in those places wherever his name was put, even in synagogues, and oratories, and threshing-floors, where they were hallowed with an altar and religion thither God came; that is, there he heard their prayer, and answered and blessed accordingly, still in proportion to that degree of religion which was put upon them. And those places, when they had once entertained religion, grew separate and sacred for ever. For therefore David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, that it might never be

turn to common use any more : for it had been no trouble or inconvenience to Araunah to have used his floor for one solemnity ; but he offered to give it, and David resolved to buy it, because it must of necessity be aliened from common uses, to which it could never return any more when once it had been the instrument of a religious solemnity. And yet this was no part of Moses's law, that every place of a temporary sacrifice should be ' holy for ever.' David had no guide in this but right reason and the religion of all the world. For such things which were great instruments of public ends, and things of highest use, were also in all societies of men of greatest honour, and immured by reverence and the security of laws. For honour and reputation is not a thing inherent in any creature, but depends upon the estimate of God or men, who either in diffusion or representation become fountains of a derivative honour. Thus some men are honourable ; that is, those who are fountains of honour in civil account have commanded that they should be honoured. And so places and things are made honourable ; that as honourable persons are to be distinguished from others by honourable usages and circumstances proper to them, so also should places and things (upon special reason separate) have a usage proper to them, when by a public instrument or minister they are so separated. No common usage then ; something proper to tell what they are, and to what purposes they are designed, and to signify their separation and extraordinariness. Such are the person of the prince, the archives and records of a kingdom, the walls and great defences of the imperial city, the eagles and

ensigns of war amongst the Romans, and above all things, though not above all persons, the temples and altars, and all the instruments of religion. And there is much reason in it ; for thus a servant of a king, though his employment be naturally mean, yet is more honourable, because he relates to the most excellent person ; and therefore much more those things which relate to God. And though this be the reason why it should be so, yet for this and other reasons they that have power, that is, they who are acknowledged to be the fountains and the channels of honour, I mean the supreme power and public fame, have made it actually to be so ; for whatsoever all wise men, and all good men, and all public societies, and all supreme authority hath commanded to be honoured or revered, that is honourable and reverend ; and this honour and reverence is to be expressed according to the customs of the nation, and instruments of honour proper to the nature of the thing or person respectively. Whatsoever is esteemed so, is so ; because honour and noble separations are relative actions and terms, creatures and productions of fame, and the voice of princes, and the sense of people : and they who will not honour those things or those persons which are thus decreed to be honourable, have no communications with the civilities of humanity, or the guises of wise nations ; they do not ‘ give honour to whom honour belongs.’ Now that which in civil account we call *honourable*, the same in religious account we call *sacred* : for by both these words we mean things or persons made separate and retired from common opinion and vulgar usages, by reason of some excellency really inherent in them ; (such

as are excellent men;) or for their relation to excellent persons, or great ends, public or religious;¹ (and so servants of princes, and ministers of religion, and its instruments and utensils, are made honourable or sacred;) and the expressions of their honour are all those actions and usages which are contrary to despise, and above the usage of vulgar things or places. Whatsoever is sacred, that is honourable, for its religious relation; and whatsoever is honourable, that also is sacred, (that is, separate from the vulgar usages and account,) for its civil excellency or relation.² The result is this, that when public authority, or the consent of a nation, hath made any place sacred for the uses of religion, we must esteem it sacred, just as we esteem persons honourable who are so honoured.³ And thus are judges, and the very places of judicature, the king's presence-chamber, the chair of state, the senate-house, the royal ensigns of a prince; whose gold and purple in its natural capacity hath in it no more dignity than the money of the bank, or the cloth of the mart; but it hath much more for its signification and relative use. And it is certain, these things, whose excellency depends upon their relation, must

¹ Religiosum est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum à nobis est, verbum à reliquendo dictum, tanquam ceremonia à carendo. Gel. lib. iv. c. 9.—“That is religion which on account of a certain sanctity has been removed and separated, and the word is derived from *reliquendo*, ‘as ceremony from *carendo*.”

² Ceremoniæ deorum, sanctitas regum. Jul. Cæsar apud Sueton. —“The ceremonies of the gods is the sanctity of kings.”

³ Ex lege cujusque civitatis jubentur dii coli. Dictum 5 Sapientum apud Zenophon. Σπένδειν δὲ ἔστι θύειν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἑκάστοις προσήκει. Epict. c. 38.—“The law of every state commands the worship of the gods. It behoves every one to offer oblations and sacrifices according to his paternal religion.”

receive the degree of their honour in that proportion they have to their term and foundation; and therefore what belongs to God (as holy places of religion) must rise highest in this account; I mean higher than any other places. And this is besides the honour which God hath put upon them by his presence and his title to them, which in all religions he hath signified to us.

4. Indeed among the Jews, as God had confined his church and the rites of religion to be used only in communion and participation with that nation, so also he had limited his presence, and was more sparing of it than in the time of the gospel his Son declared he would be. 'It was said of old that at Jerusalem men ought to worship;' that is, by a solemn, public, and great address in the capital expresses of religion, in the distinguishing rites of liturgy; for else it had been no new thing; for in ordinary prayers God was then, and long before, pleased to hear Jeremy in the dungeon, Manasses in prison, Daniel in the lions' den, Jonas in the belly of the deep, others in the offices yet more solemn in the *proseuchæ*, in the houses of prayer, which the Jews had, not only in their dispersion, but even in Palestine, for their diurnal and nocturnal offices. But when the holy Jesus had 'broken down the partition wall,' then the most solemn offices of religion were as unlimited as their private devotions were before; for wherever a temple should be built, thither God would come, if he were 'worshipped spiritually and in truth;' that is, according to the rites of Christ, (who is 'grace and truth,') and the dictate of the Spirit, and analogy of the gospel. All places were now alike to build churches in, or memorials

for God, God's houses. And that our blessed Saviour discourses of places of public worship to the woman of Samaria is notorious, because the whole question was concerning the great addresses of Moses's rites, whether at Jerusalem or mount Gerizim, which were the places of the right and the schismatical temple, the confinements of the whole religion : and in antithesis Jesus said, not here nor there shall be the solemnities of address to God, but in all places you may build a temple, and God will dwell in it.

5. And this hath descended from the first beginning of religion down to the consummation of it in the perfections of the gospel : for the apostles of our Lord carried the offices of the gospel into the temple of Jerusalem ; there they preached and prayed, and paid vows, but never, that we read of, offered sacrifice : which shows that the offices purely evangelical were proper to be done in any of God's proper places, and that thither they went not in compliance with Moses's rites, but merely for gospel duties, or for such offices which were common to Moses and Christ, such as were prayers and vows. While the temple was yet standing, they had peculiar places for the assemblies of the faithful, where either by accident, or observation, or religion, or choice, they met regularly. And I instance in the house of John, surnamed Mark, which, as Alexander reports in the life of St. Barnabas, was consecrated by many actions of religion—by our blessed Saviour's eating the passover, his institution of the holy eucharist, his farewell sermon ; and the apostles met there in the octaves of Easter, whither Christ came, and hallowed it with his presence ; and there, to make up the relative sanctification

complete, the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in the feast of pentecost. And this was erected into a fair fabric, and is mentioned as a famous church by St. Jerome, and Venerable Bede;¹ in which, as Adricomius adds, St. Peter preached that sermon which was miraculously prosperous in the conversion of three thousand : there St. James, brother of our Lord, was consecrated first bishop of Jerusalem ; St. Stephen and the other six were there ordained deacons ; there the apostles kept their first council, and compiled their creed : by these actions and their frequent conventions showing the same reason, order, and prudence of religion in assignation of special places of divine service, which were ever observed by all the nations, and religions, and wise men of the world. And it were a strange imagination to fancy, that in Christian religion there is any principle contrary to that wisdom of God and all the world, which for order, for necessity, for convenience, for the solemnity of worship, hath set apart places for God and for religion. Private prayer had always an unlimited residence and relation, even under Moses's law ; but the public solemn prayer of sacrifice in the law of Moses was restrained to one temple. In the law of nature it was not confined to one, but yet determined to public and solemn places. And when the holy Jesus disparked the inclosures of Moses, we all returned to the permissions and liberty of the natural law, in which, although the public and solemn prayers were confined to a temple, yet the temple was not confined to a place ; but they might be any where, so they were at all, instruments of or-

¹ Epist. xxvii. De locis sanctis, cap. iii. In descrip. Hieros. n. 6.

der, conveniences of assembling, residences of religion. And God, who always loved order, and was apt to hear all holy and prudent prayers, (and therefore also the prayers of consecration,) hath often declared that he loves such places, that he will dwell in them : not that they are advantages to him, but that he is pleased to make them so to us. And therefore all nations of the world built public houses for religion : and since all ages of the church did so too, it had need be a strong and a convincing argument that must show they were deceived. And ' if any man list to be contentious,' he must be answered with St. Paul's reproof, ' We have no such custom, nor the churches of God.'

6. Thus St. Paul reprov'd the Corinthians for 'despising the church of God' by such uses, which were therefore unfit for God's, because they were proper for their own, that is for common houses. And although they were at first, and in the descending ages so afflicted by the tyranny of enemies, that they could not build many churches ; yet some they did, and the churches themselves suffered part of the persecution. For so Eusebius reports, that when, under Severus and Gordianus, Philip and Galienus, the Christian affairs were in a tolerable condition, they built churches in great number and expense. But when the persecution waxed hot under Diocletian, down went the churches, upon a design to extinguish, or disadvantage the religion. Maximinus gave leave to rebuild them. Upon which rescript (saith the story) the Christians were overjoyed, and raised them up to an incredible height and incomparable beauty. This was Chris-

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 22.

tian religion then, and so it hath continued ever since; and unless we should have new reason and new revelation, it must continue so till our churches are exchanged for thrones, and our chapels for seats placed before the Lamb, in the eternal temple of the celestial Jerusalem.

7. And to this purpose it is observed, that the holy Jesus first ejected the beasts of sacrifice out of the temple, and then proclaimed the place holy, and the scene of representing prayers; which in type intimates the same thing which is involved in the expression of the next words, 'My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations:' now and for ever to the Jews and to the Gentiles, in all circumstances and variety of time and nation. God's houses are holy in order to holy uses; the time as unlimited as the nations were indefinite and universal. Which is the more observable, because it was of the outward courts, not whither Moses's rites alone were admitted, but the natural devotion of Jews and Gentile proselytes, that Christ affirmed it to be holy, to be the house of God, and the place of prayer. So that the religion of public places of prayer is not a rite of Levi, but a natural and prudent circumstance and advantage of religion, in which all wise men agree; who therefore must have some common principle with influence upon all the world, which must be the univocal cause of the consent of all men; which common principle must either be a dictate of natural or prime reason, or else some tradition from the first parents of mankind; which because it had order in it, beauty, religion, and confirmation from Heaven, and no reason to contest against it, it hath surprised the understanding and practices of all nations. And in-

deed we find that even in paradise God had that which is analogical to a church, a distinct place where he manifested himself present in proper manner. For Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, 'hid themselves from the presence of the Lord:' and this was the word in all descents of the church, for the being of God in holy places, 'the presence of the Lord was there.' And probably when Adam, from this intimation, or a greater direction, had taught Cain and Abel to offer sacrifices to God in a certain place, where they were observed of each in their several offerings, it became one of the rules of religion which was derived to their posterity by tradition, the only way they had to communicate the dictates of divine commandment.

8. There is no more necessary to be added in behalf of holy places, and to assert them into the family and relatives of religion: our estimate and deportment towards them is matter of practice, and therefore of proper consideration. To which purpose I consider, that holy places being the residence of God's name upon earth, there where he hath put it, that by fiction of law it may be the sanctuary and the last resort in all calamities and need,¹ God hath sent his agents to possess them in person for him. Churches and oratories are regions and courts of angels, and they are there not only to minister to the saints, but also they possess them in the right of God. There they are; so the greatest and Prince of spirits tells us, the Holy Ghost: 'I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and his train filled the temple; above it stood the seraphim:'² that was God's train. And therefore

¹ Psalm xxvii. 4, 5, 6.

² Isa. vi. 1, 2.

holy David knew that his addresses to God were in the presence of angels : ‘ I will praise thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I sing praise unto thee : ’ ¹ ‘ before the *angels*,’ so it is in the Septuagint.² And that we might know where or how the kingly worshipper would pay this adoration, he adds, ‘ I will worship towards thy holy temple.’ And this was so known by him, that it became expressive of God’s manner of presence in heaven : ‘ the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels ; and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.’³ God in the midst of angels, and the angels in the midst of the holy place ; and God in heaven in the midst of that holy circle, as sure as he is amongst angels in the recesses of his sanctuary. Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels ? and are the memorials of the gospel destitute of so brave a retinue ? Did the beatified spirits wait upon the types ? and do they decline the office at the ministration of the substance ? Is the nature of man made worse since the incarnation of the Son of God ? and have the angels purchased an exemption from their ministry since Christ became our brother ? We have little reason to think so. And therefore St. Paul still makes use of the argument to press women to modesty and humility in churches, ‘ because of the angels.’ And upon the same stock St. Chrysostom chides the people of his diocess for walking, and laughing, and prating in churches : “ The church is not a shop of manufactures or merchandise, but

¹ Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.

² *Εναντίον ἀγγέλων*, LXX. Orat Agrip. apud Joseph. lib. ii. c. 16, de Bello Judaic.

³ Psalm lxiii. 17.

the place of angels and of archangels, the court of God, and the image or representment of heaven itself."¹

9. For if we consider that Christianity is something more than ordinary, that there are mysteries in our religion, and in none else; that God's angels are ministering spirits for our good, and especially about the conveyances of our prayers, either we must think very low of Christianity, or that greater things are in it than the presence of angels in our churches: and yet, if there were no more, we should do well to behave ourselves there with the thoughts and apprehensions of heaven about us; always remembering that our business there is an errand of religion, and God is the object of our worshippings. And therefore, although by our weakness we are fixed in the lowness of men, yet because God's infinity is our object, it were very happy if our actions did bear some few degrees of a proportionable and commensurate address.

10. Now that the angels are there in the right of God, and are a manner and an exhibition of the Divine presence is therefore certain, because whenever it is said in the Old Testament that God appeared, it was by an angel: and the law itself, in the midst of all the glorious terrors of its manifestation, 'was ordained by angels,' and 'a word spoken by angels,' and yet God is said to have descended upon the mount. And in the greatest glory that ever shall be revealed till the consummation of all things, the instrument of the Divine splendour is the apparition of angels: for when the

¹ Homil. xvi. in 1 Cor. et de Sacerd. Τότε ἃ ἄγγελοι παρέστηκασι τῷ ἱερεῖ, &c. St. Ambros. in c. 1 Lucæ.

holy 'Jesus shall come in the glory of his Father,' it is added by way of explication, that is, 'with an host of angels.'

11. The result is those words of God to his people 'Reverence my sanctuary :'¹ for what God loves in an especial manner, it is most fit we should esteem accordingly. 'God loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.'² The least turf of hallowed glebe is with God himself of more value than all the champaign of common possession ; it is better in all senses. 'The temple is better than gold,'³ said our blessed Saviour ; and therefore it were well we should do that which is expressed in the command of giving reverence to it ; for we are too apt to pay undue devotions to gold. Which precept the holiest of that nation expressed by worshipping towards the sanctuary, by pulling off their shoes when they went into it, by making it the determination of their religious addresses, by falling down low upon the earth in their accesses, by opening their windows towards it in their private devotions, by calling it the glory of their nation ; as is certain in the instances of David, Daniel, and the wife of Phinehas. I shall not need to say, that the devouter Christians in the first ages did worship God with solemnities of address whenever they entered into their oratories. It was a civility Jesus commanded his disciples to use to common houses : 'When ye enter into a house salute it.' I suppose he means the dwellers in it. And it is certain, whatever those devouter people did in their religious approaches, they designed it to God, who was the *major domo*, the master of those assemblies.

¹ Lev. xix. 30.

² Psalm lxxxvii. 2.

³ Matt. xxiii. 17.

And thus did the convinced Christian in St. Paul's discourse, when he came into the church where they were prophesying in a known language: 'The secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God.'

12. It was no unhandsome expression of reverencing God's sanctuary, that pious people ever used, in bestowing costly and fair ornaments upon it; for so all the Christians did. As soon as themselves came from contempt and scorn, they raised Christian oratories to an equal portion of their honour; and by this way they thought they did honour to God, who was the *numen* of the place. Not that a rich house or costly offertory is better in respect of God, for to him all is alike, save that in equal abilities our devotion is distinguished by them; and be the offering never so contemptible, it is a rich devotion that gives the best we have: because (although if all the wealth of the Levant were united into a present, it were short of God's infinity; yet) such an offertory, or any best we have, makes demonstration, that if we had an offering infinitely better, we should give it, to express our love and our belief of God's infinite merit and perfection. And therefore let not 'the widow's two mites' become a precedent to the instance and value of our donation; and because she, who gave no more, was accepted, think that two farthings is as fit to be cast into the corban as two thousand pounds. For the reason why our blessed Saviour commended the widow's oblation was for the greatness of it, not the smallness: 'she gave all she had, even all her living,' therefore she was accepted. And indeed,

since God gives to us more than enough, beyond our necessities, much for our conveniency, much for ease, much for repute, much for public compliances, for variety, for content, for pleasure, for ornament, we should deal unworthily with God Almighty, if we limit and restrain our returns to him, by confining them within the narrow bounds of mere necessity. Certainly beggarly services and cheapness is not more pleasing to God than a rich and magnificent address. To the best of essences the best of presents is most proportionable. And although the service of the soul and spirit is most delectable and esteemed by God ; yet because our souls are served by things perishing and material, and we are of that constitution, that by the body we serve the spirit, and by both we serve God ; as the spirit is chiefly to be offered to God, because it is better than the body, so the richest oblation is the best in an equal power and the same person, because it is the best of things material : and although it hath not the excellency of the spirit, it hath an excellency that a cheap oblation hath not ; and besides the advantage of the natural value, it can no otherwise be spoiled than a meaner offering may, it is always capable of the same commendation from the piety of the presenter's spirit, and may be as much purified and made holy as the cheaper or more contemptible. God hath not any where expressed, that he accepts of a cheaper offering, but when we are not able to give him a better. When the people brought offerings more than enough for the tabernacle, Moses restrained their forwardness, by saying 'it was enough ;' but yet commended the disposition highly, and wished it might be perpetual. But God chid the people

when they let his house lie waste without reparation of its decaying beauty ; and therefore sent famines upon the land, and a curse into their estate, because they would not, by giving a portion to religion, sanctify and secure all the rest. For the way for a man to be a saver by his religion is, to deposit one part of his estate in the temple, and one in the hands of the poor ; for these are God's treasury and stewards respectively. And this is ' laying up treasures in heaven : ' and besides that it will procure blessing to other parts, it will help to save our souls ; and that is good husbandry, that is worth the saving.

13. For I consider that those riches and beauties in churches and religious solemnities, which add nothing to God, add much devotion to us, and much honour and efficacy to devotion. For since impression is made upon the soul by the intervening of corporal things, our religion and devotion of the soul receives the addition of many degrees by such instruments ; insomuch that we see persons of the greatest fancy, and such who are most pleased with outward fairnesses, are most religious. Great understandings make religion lasting and reasonable ; but great fancies make it more scrupulous, strict, operative, and effectual : and therefore it is strange, that we shall bestow such great expenses to make our own houses convenient and delectable, that we may entertain ourselves with complacency and appetite, and yet think that religion is not worth the ornament, nor our fancies fit to be carried into the choice and prosecution of religious actions with sweetness, entertainments, and fair propositions. If we say that God is not the better for a rich house or a costly service, we may

also remember that neither are we the better for rich clothes; and the sheep will keep us as modest, as warm, and as clean as the silkworm; and a gold chain or a carkenet of pearl does no more contribute to our happiness than it does to the service of religion: for if we reply, that they help to the esteem and reputation of our persons, and the distinction of them from the vulgar, from the servants of the lot of Issachar, and add reverence and veneration to us; how great a shame is it, if we study by great expenses to get reputation and accidental advantages to ourselves, and not by the same means to purchase reverence and esteem to religion; since we see that religion, amongst persons of ordinary understandings, receives as much external and accidental advantages by the accession of exterior ornaments and accommodation, as we ourselves can by rich clothes and garments of wealth, ceremony, and distinction! and as in princes' courts the reverence to princes is quickened and increased by an outward state and glory, so also it is in the service of God. Although the understandings of men are no more satisfied by a pompous magnificence than by a cheap plainness, yet the eye is, and the fancy, and the affections, and the senses: that is, many of our faculties are more pleased with religion, when religion by such instruments and conveyances pleases them. And it was noted by Sozomen concerning Valens the Arian emperor, that when he came to Cæsarea in Cappadocia, he praised St. Basil their bishop, and upon more easy terms revoked his banishment, because he was a grave person, and did his holy offices with reverent and decent addresses, and kept his church assemblies with much ornament and solemnity.

14. But when I consider that saying of St. Gregory, "that the church is heaven within the tabernacle, heaven dwelling among the sons of men," and remember that God hath studded all the firmament and paved it with stars, because he loves to have his house beauteous, and highly representative of his glory, I see no reason we should not do, as Apollinaris says God does, "in earth do the works of heaven;" for he is the God of beauties and perfections, and every excellency in the creature is a portion of influence from the divinity, and therefore is the best instrument of conveying honour to him, who made them for no other end but for his own honour, as the last resort of all other ends for which they were created.

15. But the best manner to reverence the sanctuary is, by the continuation of such actions which gave it the first title of holiness. 'Holiness becometh thine house for ever,' said David. *Sancta sanctis*, holy persons and holy rites in holy places. That as it had the first relation of sanctity by the consecration of a holy and reverend minister and president of religion, so it may be perpetuated in holy offices, and receive the daily consecration by the assistance of sanctified and religious persons. *Foris canes*, dogs and criminal persons are unfit for churches: the best ornament and beauty of a church is a holy priest and a sanctified people. For since angels dwell in churches, and God hath made his name to dwell there too, if there also be a holy people, that there be saints as well as angels, it is a holy fellowship and a blessed communion: but to see a devil there, would scare the most confident and bold fancy, and disturb the good meeting; and such is every wicked and graceless per-

son. 'Have not I chosen twelve of you? and one of you is a devil.' An evil soul is an evil spirit; and such are no good ornaments for temples. And it is a shame that a goodly Christian church should be like an Egyptian temple; without, goodly buildings—within, a dog or a cat for the deity they adore. It is worse, if in our addresses to holy places and offices, we bear our lusts under our garments; for dogs and cats are of God's making, but our lusts are not, but are God's enemies; and therefore, besides the unholiness, it is an affront to God to bring them along, and it defiles the place in a great degree.

16. For there is a defiling of a temple by insinuation of impurities, and another by direct and positive profanation, and a third by express sacrilege: this defiles a temple to the ground. Every small sin is an unwelcome guest, and is a spot in those feasts of charity which entertain us often in God's houses: but there are some (and all great crimes are such) which desecrate the place, unhallow the ground, as to our particulars, stop the ascent of our prayers, obstruct the current of God's blessings, turn religion into bitterness, and devotion into gall; such as are marked in Scripture with a distinguishing character, as enemies to the peculiar dispositions of religion: and such are unchastity, which defiles the temples of our bodies; covetousness, which sets up an idol instead of God; and unmercifulness, which is a direct enemy to the mercies of God, and the fair return of our prayers. He that shows not the mercies of alms, of forgiveness, and comfort, is forbid to hope for comfort, relief, or forgiveness from the hands of God. A pure mind is the best manner of worship, and the

impurity of a crime is the greatest contradiction to the honour and religion of holy places. And therefore, let us imitate the precedent of the most religious of kings: 'I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar:'¹ always remembering those decretory and final words of St. Paul, 'He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy.'²

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who dwellest not in temples made with hands, the heaven of heavens is not able to contain thee, and yet thou art pleased to manifest thy presence amongst the sons of men by special issues of thy favour and benediction. Make my body and soul to be a temple pure and holy, apt for the entertainments of the Holy Jesus, and for the habitation of the Holy Spirit. Lord, be pleased, with thy rod of paternal discipline, to cast out all impure lusts, all worldly affections, all covetous desires, from this thy temple; that it may be a place of prayer and meditation, of holy appetites and chaste thoughts, of pure intentions and zealous desires of pleasing thee; that I may become also a sacrifice as well as a temple, eaten up with the zeal of thy glory, and consumed with the fire of love; that not one thought may be entertained by me but such as may be like perfume breathing from the altar of incense, and not a word may pass from me but may have the accent of heaven upon it, and sound pleasantly in thy ears. O dearest God, fill every faculty of my soul with impressions, dispositions, capacities, and aptnesses of religion: and do thou hallow my soul, that I may be possessed with zeal and religious affections, loving thee above all things in the world, worshipping thee with the humblest adorations and frequent addresses, continually feeding upon the apprehensions of the divine sweetness, and considerations of thy infinite excellencies, and observations of thy righteous commandments, and the feast of a holy conscience, as an antepast of eternity, and consignment to the joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¹ Psalm xxvi. 6.

² 1 Cor. iii. 17.

SECTION XII.

Of Jesus's departure into Galilee ; his manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching ; his calling of Disciples ; and what happened until the Second Passover.

1. WHEN 'Jesus understood that John was cast into prison,'¹ and that the Pharisees were envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to his baptism, which he ministered, not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, (who, as Euodius bishop of Antioch reports, baptized the blessed virgin, his mother, and Peter only, and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and they others,*) he left Judea, and came into Galilee : and in his passage he must touch Sychar, a city of Samaria, where, in the heat of the day and the weariness of his journey, he sat himself down upon the margin of Jacob's well ; whither, when 'his disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan woman cometh to draw water,' of whom Jesus asked some to cool his thirst, and refresh his weariness.

2. Little knew the woman the excellency of the person that asked so small a charity ; neither had she been taught, that 'a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded,' and much rather such a present to the Lord himself. But she prosecuted the spite of her nation, and the interest and quarrel of the schism ; and instead of washing

¹ Matt. iv. 12.

² Euthym. c. 3. in Joan. apud Niceph. lib. ii. c. 3. Hist.

Jesus's feet, and giving him drink, demanded, ' why he, being a Jew, should ask water of a Samaritan : for the Jews have no intercourse with the Samaritans.'

3. The ground of the quarrel was this :—In the sixth year of Hezekiah, Salmanasar, king of Assyria, sacked Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Assyrian colony in the town and country, who, by divine vengeance, were destroyed by lions, which no power of man could restrain or lessen. The king thought the cause was, their not serving the God of Israel according to the rites of Moses ; and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest to instruct the remanent inhabitants in the Jewish religion ; who so learned and practised it, that they still retained the superstition of the Gentile rites ; till Manasses, the brother of Jaddi, the high-priest at Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governor under king Darius. Manasses being reprov'd for marrying a stranger, the daughter of an uncircumcised Gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to Samaria, persuades his father-in-law to build a temple in mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high-priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Aaron, and commences a schism in the time of Alexander the Great : from whence the question of religion grew so high, that it begat disaffections, anger, animosities, quarrels, bloodshed, and murders, not only in Palestine, but wherever a Jew and Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet. Such being the na-

¹ Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti :
Quassitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.—Juv. Sat. xiv.

ture of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world when other men are not of their minds; and that they please God most when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates. This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite that ever any was, because both the people were much given to superstition: and this was helped forward by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals and ceremonials, and which they cared not much to hallow and make moral by the intertexture of spiritual senses and charity. And therefore the Jews called the Samaritans accursed: the Samaritans, at the paschal solemnity, would at midnight, when the Jews' temple was open, scatter dead men's bones, to profane and desecrate the place; and both would fight, and eternally dispute the question; sometimes referring it to arbitrators, and then the conquered party would decline the arbitration after sentence; which they did at Alexandria before Ptolemæus Philometor, when Andronicus had, by a rare and exquisite oration, procured sentence against Theodosius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates.¹ The sentence was given for Jerusalem, and the schism increased, and lasted till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

4. And it was so implanted and woven in with every understanding, that when the woman perceived 'Jesus to be a prophet,' she undertook this question with him: 'Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the

¹ Joseph. Ant. lib. xviii. cap. 3.

place where men ought to worship.' Jesus knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the rent wider. And though he gave testimony to the truth, by saying, 'Salvation is of the Jews;' and 'We know what we worship, ye do not;' yet because the subject of this question was shortly to be taken away, Jesus takes occasion to preach the gospel, to hasten an expedient, and by way of anticipation to reconcile the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation to be verified for ever; neither here nor there by way of confinement, not in one country more than another, but wherever any man shall call upon God in spirit and truth, there he shall be heard.

5. But all this while the holy Jesus was a-thirst, and therefore hastens at least to discourse of water, though as yet he got none. He tells her of living water, of eternal satisfactions, of never thirsting again, of her own personal condition, of matrimonial relation, and professes himself to be the Messiah: and then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to see him alone talking with a woman, beside his custom and usual reservation. But the woman, full of joy and wonder, left her water-pot, and ran to the city, to publish the Messiah; and immediately all the city came out to see; and many believed on him upon the testimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own discourses. They invited him to the town, and received him with hospitable civilities for two days, after which he departed to his own Galilee.

6. Jesus therefore came into the country, where he was received with respect and fair entertainment, because of the miracles which the Galileans

saw done by him at the feast. And being at Cana, where he wrought the first miracle, a noble personage, a little king say some, a palatinate says St. Jerome, a kingly person certainly, came to Jesus with much reverence and desire that he would be pleased to come to his house, and cure his son, now ready to die ; which he seconds with much importunity, fearing lest his son be dead before he get thither. Jesus, who did not do his miracles by natural operations, cured the child at distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him his son lived ; which by narration of his servants he found to be true, and that he recovered at the same time when Jesus spake these salutary and healing words. Upon which accident he and all his house became disciples.

7. And now Jesus left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum, a maritime town, and of great resort, choosing that for his scene of preaching, and his place of dwelling : for now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptist was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand. He therefore preached the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance : ‘ Repent ye, and believe the gospel.’ And what that gospel was, the sum and series of all his sermons afterwards did declare.

8. The work was now grown high and pregnant, and Jesus saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service in the work of preaching, and to be witnesses of all that he should say, do, or teach, for ends which were afterwards made public and excellent. Jesus, therefore, ‘ as he walked by the sea of Galilee,’ called Simon and Andrew ; who knew him before by the preaching of John, and now left all, their ship and their net,

and followed him. And when he was gone a little further, he calls the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and they went after him. And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacs, cleansing lepers, and giving strength to paralytics and lame people.

9. But when 'the people pressed on him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,' and presently 'entered into Simon's ship,' commanded him 'to launch into the deep;' and from thence he taught the people, and there wrought a miracle: for, being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the fishes of the sea, and they obeyed. For when Simon, who had fished all night in vain, let down his net at the command of Jesus, he inclosed so great a multitude of fishes that the net brake, and the fishermen were amazed, and fearful at so prodigious a draught. But beyond the miracle, it was intended that a representation should be made of the plenitude of the catholic church, and multitudes of believers who should be taken by Simon and the rest of the disciples, whom by that miracle he consigned to become fishers of men, who by their artifices of prudence and holy doctrine might gain souls to God; that when the net should be drawn to shore, and separation made by the angels, they and their disciples might be differenced from the reprobate portion.

10. But the light of the sun uses not to be confined to a province or a kingdom; so great a prophet, and so divine a physician, and so great miracles, created a fame loud as thunder, but not so

full of sadness and presage. Immediately the f
of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to
multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem,
Judæa. And all that had any sick with di
diseases brought them to him; and he laid
hands on every one of them, and healed them. .
when he cured the lunatics and persons posse
with evil spirits, the devils cried out, and confe
him to be Christ, the Son of God. But he suff
them not; choosing rather to work faith in
persuasions of his disciples by moral argum
and the placid demonstrations of the Spirit,
there might in faith be an excellency in propo
to the choice, and that it might not be r
violent by the conviction and forced testimoni
accursed and unwilling spirits.

11. But when Jesus saw his assembly was gr
full, and his audience numerous, he went up
a mountain; and when his disciples came
him, he made that admirable sermon, called
sermon upon the mount;’ (which is a divine re
tory of most excellent truths and mysterious dic
of secret theology, and contains a breviary o
those precepts which integrate the moralit
Christian religion;) pressing the moral pre
given by Moses, and enlarging their obligatio
a stricter sense and more severe exposition, that
righteousness might exceed the righteousne
the Scribes and Pharisees. “He preaches pe
tion, and the doctrines of meekness, povert
spirit, Christian mourning, desire of holy th
mercy and purity, peace and toleration of inju
affixing a special promise of blessing to be
guerdon and inheritance of those graces
spiritual excellencies. He explicates some pa

the decalogue, and adds appendices and precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries, an indifference and incuriousness of temporal provisions, and a seeking of the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness."

12. When Jesus had finished his sermon, and descended from the mountain, a poor leprous person came and worshipped, and begged to be cleansed : which Jesus soon granted, engaging him not to publish it where he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest, to offer an oblation according to the rites of Moses's law ; and then came directly to Capernaum, and taught in the synagogues upon the sabbath-days ; where in his sermons he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God ; not inviting the people by the soft arguments and insinuations of Scribes and Pharisees, but by demonstrations and issues of divinity. There he cures a demoniac in one of their synagogues, and by and by, after going abroad, he heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever ; insomuch that he grew the talk of all men and their wonder, till they flocked so to him to see him, to hear him, to satisfy their curiosity and their needs, that after he had healed those multitudes which beset the house of Simon, where he cured his mother of the fever, he retired himself into a desert place very early in the morning, that he might have an opportunity to pray, free from the oppressions and noises of the multitude.

13. But neither so could he be hid ; but, like a light shining by the fringes of a curtain, he was soon discovered in his solitude : for the multitude

found him out, imprisoning him in their circuits and undeniable attendances. But Jesus told them plainly, he must preach the gospel to other cities also; and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Gennesaret, so to quit the throng. Whither as he was going, a scribe offered himself a disciple to his institution; till Jesus told him his condition to be worse than foxes and birds, for whom an habitation is provided, but none for him, no, not a place where to bow his head and find rest. And what became of this forward professor afterward we find not. Others that were probationers of this fellowship Jesus bound to a speedy profession, not suffering one to go home to bid his friends farewell, nor another so much as to bury his dead.

14. By the time Jesus got to the ship it was late; and he, heavy to sleep, rested on a pillow, and slept soundly as weariness, meekness, and innocence could make him; insomuch that a violent storm, the chiding of the winds and waters, which then happened, could not awake him; till the ship being almost covered with broken billows and the impetuous dashings of the waters, the men already sunk in their spirits, and the ship like enough to sink too, the disciples awaked him, and called for help: 'Master, carest thou not that we perish?' Jesus arising reproved their infidelity, commanded the wind to be still and the seas peaceable, and immediately there was a great calm; and they presently arrived in the land of the Gergesenes or Gerasenes.

15. In the land of Gergesites, or Gergesenes, which was the remaining name of an extinct people, being one of the nations whom the sons of

Jacob drave from their inheritance, there were two cities ; Gadara, from the tribe of Gad, to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land ; (which, having been destroyed by the Jews, was rebuilt by Pompey at the request of Demetrius Gadarensis, Pompey's freed man;) and near to it was Gerasa, as Josephus reports.¹ Which diversity of towns and names is the cause of the various recitation of this story by the evangelists. Near the city of Gadara there were many sepulchres in the hollow-nesses of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invoking evil spirits; insomuch that at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce, and so had been long, insomuch that no man durst pass that way.

16. Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed person. But there were certain men feeding swine, which, though extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies and quarterings of soldiers they were permitted, and divers privileges granted to the masters of such herds ;² and because Gadara was a Greek city, and the company mingled of Greeks, Syrians, and Jews ; these last in all likelihood not making the greatest number. The devils therefore besought Jesus, he would not send them into the abyss, but ' permit them to enter into the swine.' He gave them leave : ' and the swine ran violently down a steep place' into the hot baths,

¹ Joseph. de Bel. Jud. lib. i. c. 5, and lib. iii. c. 2, and lib. v. c. 3 ; Epiph. contra Eb. Hæres. 30.

² Cod. Theod. de Suariis. Joseph. lib. ii. de Bel. Jud. c. 33.

which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built, which smaller congregation of waters the Jews used to call 'sea,' or else, as others think, into the lake of Gennesaret, and perished in the waters. But this accident so troubled the inhabitants, that they came and entreated Jesus to depart out of their coasts: and he did so. Leaving Galilee of the Gentiles, he came to the Lesser Galilee, and so again to the city of Capernaum.

17. But when he was come thither, he was met by divers Scribes and Pharisees, who came from Jerusalem, and doctors of the law from Galilee: and while they were sitting in a house, which was compassed with multitudes, that no business or necessity could be admitted to the door, a poor paralytic was brought to be cured, and they were fain to uncover the tiles of the house, and let him down in his bed with cords in the midst, before Jesus sitting in conference with the doctors. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Man, thy sins be forgiven thee.' At which saying the Pharisees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy, and that none but God could forgive sins, Jesus was put to verify his absolution; which he did in a just satisfaction and proportion to their understandings: for the Jews did believe that all afflictions were punishments for sin; ('Who sinned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?') and that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin: and therefore Jesus, to prove that his sins were forgiven, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin, and by curing the palsy prevented their further murmur about the pardon: 'that ye might know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to

the sick of the palsy,) arise, take up thy bed and walk: and the man arose, was healed, and glorified God.'

18. Awhile after, Jesus went again towards the sea; and on his way, seeing Matthew the publican sitting at the receipt of custom, he bade him follow him. Matthew first feasted Jesus, and then became his disciple. But the Pharisees that were with him began to be troubled that he ate with publicans and sinners: for the office of publican, though among the Romans it was honest and of great account, and "the flower of the Roman knights, the ornament of the city, the security of the commonwealth, was accounted to consist in the society of publicans;"¹ yet amongst both the Jews and Greeks the name was odious, and the persons were accursed;² not only because they were strangers that were the chief of them, who took in to them some of the nation where they were employed; but because the Jews especially stood upon the charter of their nation, and the privilege of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also because they exercised great injustices and oppressions,³ having a power un-

¹ Cicero Ep. Famil. lib. xiii. et in Orat. pro Plancio.

² Idem ad Quint. Fratrem de regimine præfecturæ Asian.

³ Vita publicanorum aperta est violentia, impunita rapina, negotiatio nulla ratione constans, inverecunda mercatura. Suidas. V. Publicanus, πάντες τελῶναι πάντες εἰσὶν ἄρπαγες.— "The life of the publican is open violence; unpunished rapine; business without rules; traffic without shame. The publicans are, without exception, plunderers."

Apud Hebræum textum D. Matthæi, Publicani dicti *Parisim*, nomine proprio latronibus qui sepes et maceriam dirimunt, licet propriè dicti *Gabaim*; unde fortasse *Gabella*.—"In the Hebrew text of D. Matthæus, publicans are called *Parisim*, the proper name of robbers, who tear down fences; although properly called *Gabaim*, from which, perhaps, *Gabella*."

limited, and a covetousness wide as hell, and greedy as the fire or the grave. But Jesus gave so fair an account concerning his converse with these persons, that the objection turned to be his apology; for therefore he conversed with them, because they were sinners: and it was as if a physician should be reproved for having so much to do with sick persons: for therefore was he sent, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of sacrifice.

19. But as the little bubbling, and gentle murmurs of the water, are presages of a storm, and are more troublesome in their prediction than their violence; so were the arguings of the Pharisees symptoms of a secret displeasure, and an ensuing war: though at first represented in the civilities of questions and scholastical discourses, yet they did but forerun vigorous objections and bold calumnies, which were the fruits of the next summer. But as yet they discoursed fairly, asking him 'why John's disciples fasted often, but the disciples of Jesus did not fast.' Jesus told them, it was because these were the days in which the bridegroom was come in person to espouse the church into himself; and therefore for 'the children of the bride-chamber to fast' then, was like the bringing of a dead corpse to the joys of a bride, or the pomp of coronation: 'the days should come that the bridegroom should retire' into his chamber, and draw the curtains; 'and then they should fast in those days.'

20. While Jesus was discoursing with the Pharisees, 'Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came to him,' desiring he would help his daughter, who lay in the confines of death, ready to depart. Whither as he was going, 'a woman met him who had

been diseased with an issue of blood twelve years,' without hope of remedy from art or nature; and therefore she runs to Jesus, thinking, without precedent, upon the confident persuasions of a holy faith, 'that if she did but touch the hem of his garment, she should be whole.' She came trembling, and full of hope and reverence, and 'touched his garment; and immediately the fountain of her unnatural emanation was stopped,' and reverted to its natural course and offices. St. Ambrose says that this woman was Martha. But it is not likely that she was a Jewess, but a Gentile, because of that return which she made in memory of her cure and honour of Jesus according to the Gentile rites. For Eusebius reports that himself saw, at Cæsarea Philippi, a statue of brass, representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said it was erected by the care and cost of this woman; adding, (whether out of truth or easiness is not certain,) that at the pedestal of this statue an usual plant did grow, which when it was come up to that maturity and height as to arrive at the fringes of the brass monument, it was medicinal in many dangerous diseases.¹ So far Eusebius. Concerning which story I shall make no censure but this, that since St. Mark and St. Luke

¹ Lib. vii. Hist. c. 14. 'Ἐπίσημον Χρυσῷ ἄγαλμα, et τῷ Χρυσῷ ἀνδριάντα apud Sozomen. lib. v. c. 20. Johan. Damas. de Imagin. Orat. iii. ex Chronico Johan. Melalæ Antioch. Episc. ait, supplicem libellum oblatum Philippo, tetrarchæ Trachonitidis regionis, ut liceret statuas erigere in memoriam accepti beneficii.—"Johan. Damas. says, that a petition was presented to Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, for permission to raise a statue in memory of the Mercy."

affirm that this woman, before her cure, 'had sold all her substance upon physicians,'¹ it is not so imaginable how she should become able to dispose so great a sum of money as would purchase two great statues of brass. And if she could, yet still more unlikely that the Gentile princes proconsuls, who searched all places, public private, and were curiously diligent to destroy honorary monuments of Christianity, should do this alone; and that this should escape not the diligence of the persecutors, but the fury of such wars and changes as happened in Palestine and that for three hundred years together should stand up in defiance of all violences and changeable fate of all things. However it be, certain that the book against images, published by the command of Charles the Great, eight hundred and fifty years ago, gave no credit to the story. And if it had been true, it is more than probable that Justin Martyr, who was born and lived in Palestine, and Origen, who lived many years in Tyre, in the neighbourhood of the place where the statue is said to stand, and who was highly diligent to heap together all things to the advantage and reputation to the Christian cause, would not have omitted so notable an instance. It is therefore likely that the statues which Eusebius saw, and concerning which he heard such stories, were first placed there upon the stock of a heathen story or ceremony; and in process of time, for the likeness of the figures, and its capacity to be translated to the Christian story, were by the Chris-

¹ Mark, v. 6; Luke, viii. 43.

² Lib. iv. de Imagin. c. 15.

in after ages attributed, by a fiction of fancy, and afterwards by credulity confidently applied, to the present narrative.

21. 'When Jesus was come to the ruler's house,' he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jairus's daughter; and his servants had met him, and acquainted him of 'the death of the child.' Yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, and 'entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand called her,' and awakened her from the sleep of death, and 'commanded them to give her to eat,' and enjoined them not to publish the miracle. But as flames suppressed by violent detensions break out and rage with a more impetuous and rapid motion, so it happened to Jesus, who endeavouring to make the noises and reports of him less popular, made them to be oecumenical. For not only we do that most greedily from which we are most restrained, but a great merit enamelled with humility, and restrained with modesty, grows more beauteous and florid, up to the heights of wonder and glories.

22. As he came from Jairus's house, he cured two blind men, upon their petition and confession that they did believe in him, and cast out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy, but said 'he cast out devils by help of the devils:' their malice being, as usually it is, contradictory to its own design; by its being unreasonable; nothing being more sottish than for the devil to divide his kingdom upon a plot, to ruin his certainties upon hopes future and contingent. But this was but the first eruption of their malice: all the year last

past, which was the first year of Jesus's preach all was quiet; neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans nor the Galileans did malign his doctrine or persecute him; but he preached with much peace on all hands; for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction, 'the acceptable year of the Lord.'

AD. SECTION XII.

Considerations upon the intercourse happening between the Holy Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

1. WHEN the holy Jesus, perceiving it unsafe to be at Jerusalem, returned to Galilee, where the largest scene of his prophetic office was to be represented, he journeyed on foot through Samaria; and being weary and faint, hungry and thirsty, sat down by a well, and begged water of a Samaritan woman that was a sinner, who at first rebuffed him, with some incivility of language. But instead of returning anger and passion to her, his meekness, which was commenced upon the interest of her mistaken religion, preached the coming of the Messiah to her, unlocked the secrets of her heart, and let in his grace, and made 'a fountain of living water to spring up' in her soul, to extinguish the impure flames of lust which had set her on fire, burning like hell ever since the death of her fifth husband, she then becoming a concubine to the sixth. Thus Jesus transplanted nature into grace, his hunger and thirst into religious appetite.

¹ Epiphanius in Pan. lib. ii. tom. i. Hæres. 51.

the darkness of the Samaritan into a clear revelation, her sin into repentance and charity, and so quenched his own thirst by relieving her needs : and as 'it was meat to do his Father's will,' so it was drink to him to bring us to drink of 'the fountain of living water.' For thus God declared it to be a delight to him to see us live, as if he were refreshed by those felicities which he gives to us as communications of his grace, and instances of mercy, and consignations to heaven. Upon which we can look with no eye but such as sees and admires the excellency of the divine charity ; which, being an emanation from the mercies and essential compassion of eternity, God cannot choose but rejoice in it, and love the works of his mercy, who was so well pleased in the works of his power. He that was delighted in the creation, was highly pleased in the nearer conveyance of himself, when he sent the holy Jesus to bear his image, and his mercies, and his glories, and offer them to the use and benefit of man. For this was the chief of the works of God ; and therefore the blessed Master could not but be highliest pleased with it, in imitation of his heavenly Father.

2. The woman observing our Saviour to have come with his face from Jerusalem, was angry with him upon the quarrel of the old schism. The Jews and the Samaritans had differing rites, and the zealous persons upon each side did commonly dispute themselves into uncharitableness ; and so have Christians upon the same confidence and zeal, and mistake. For although 'righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness,' nor Christ with Belial ; yet the consideration of the crime of heresy, which is a spiritual wickedness, is to be separate from

the person, who is material. That is, no spiritual communion is to be endured with heretical persons, when it is certain they are such, when they are convinced by competent authority and sufficient argument. But the persons of the men are to be pitied, to be reproved, to be redargued and convinced, to be wrought upon by fair compliances and the offices of civility, and invited to the family of faith by the best arguments of charity, and the instances of a holy life. 'Having your conversation honest among men, that they may, beholding your good works, glorify God in the day when he shall visit them.'¹ Indeed if there be danger, that is, a weak understanding may not safely converse in civil society with a subtle heretic; in such cases they are to be avoided, not saluted.² But as this is only when the danger is, by reason of the unequal capacities and strengths of the person; so it must be only when the article is certainly heresy, and the person criminal, and interest is the ingredient in the persuasion, and a certain and a necessary truth destroyed by the opinion. We read that St. John espying Cerinthus in a bath, refused to wash there where the enemy of God and his Holy Son had been.³ This is a good precedent for us, when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus, and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal, and the apostle a person assisted up to infallibility. And possibly it was done by the whisper of a prophetic spirit, and upon a miraculous design; for immediately upon his retreat the bath fell down, and crushed

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 12. ² Tit. iii. 10. 2 Epist. John, 10.

³ Irenæ. lib. iii. c. 3. Euseb. lib. iii. c. 13.

Cerinthus in the ruins. But such acts of aversion as these are not easily by us to be drawn into example, unless in the same or the parallel course of equally concluding accidents. We must not quickly, nor upon slight grounds, nor unworthy instances, call heretic: there had need be a long process, and a high conviction, and a competent judge, and a necessary article, that must be ingredients into so sad and decretory definitions, and condemnation of a person or opinion. But if such instances occur, come not near the danger nor the scandal. And this advice St. Cyprian gave to the lay people of his diocess: "Let them decline their discourses, whose sermons creep and corrode like a cancer; let there be no colloquies, no banquets, no commerce with such who are excommunicate and justly driven from the communion of the church."¹ "For such persons (as St. Leo descants upon the apostle's expression of heretical discourses) creep in humbly, and with small and modest beginnings; they catch with flattery, they bind gently, and kill privily."² Let, therefore, all persons who are in danger, secure their persons and persuasions by removing far from the infection. And for the scandal, St. Herminigilda gave an heroic example, which in her persuasion, and the circumstances of the age and action, deserved the highest testimony of zeal, religious passion, and confident persuasion. For she rather chose to die by the mandate of her tyrant father, Leonigildus the Goth, than she would, at the paschal solemnity receive the blessed sacrament at the hand of an Arian bishop.³

¹ Lib. i. Ep. 3.² Serm. v. de Jejun. decimi mensis.³ Gregor. lib. iii. Dial. iii. 13.

3. But excepting these cases, which are not to be judged with forwardness, nor rashly taken measure of, we find that conversing charitably with persons of differing persuasions hath been instrumental to their conversion and God's glory. 'The believing wife *may* sanctify the unbelieving husband;' and we find it verified in church story. St. Cecily converted her husband, Valerianus; St. Theodora converted Sisinius; St. Monica converted Patricius, and Theodelinda, Agilulphus; St. Clotilda persuaded king Clodoveus to be a Christian; and St. Natolia persuaded Adrianus to be a martyr. For they, having their conversation honest and holy amongst the unbelievers, shined like virgin-tapers in the midst of an impure prison, and amused the eyes of the sons of darkness with the brightness of the flame; for the excellency of a holy life is the best argument of the inhabitation of God within the soul: and who will not offer up his understanding upon that altar, where a deity is placed as the president and author of religion? And this very intercourse of the holy Jesus with the woman, is abundant argument that it were well we were not so forward to refuse communion with dissenting persons upon the easy and confident mistakes of a too forward zeal. They that call heretic may themselves be the mistaken persons; and by refusing to communicate the civilities of hospitable entertainment, may shut their doors upon truth, and their windows against light, and refuse to let salvation in. For sometimes ignorance is the only parent of our persuasions; and many times interest hath made an impure commixture with it, and so produced the issue.

4. The holy Jesus gently insinuates his dis-

courses. 'If thou hadst known who it is that asks thee water, thou wouldst have asked water of him.' Oftentimes we know not the person that speaks, and we usually choose our doctrine by our affections to the man; but then, if we are uncivil upon the stock of prejudice, we do not know that it is Christ that calls our understandings to obedience, and our affections to duty and compliances. The woman little thought of the glories which stood right against her. He that sat upon the well, had a throne placed above the heads of cherubims. In his arms who there rested himself was the sanctuary of rest and peace, where wearied souls were to lay their heads, and dispose their cares, and there to turn them into joys, and to gild their thorns with glory. That holy tongue which was parched with heat, streamed forth rivulets of holy doctrine, which were to water all the world, to turn our deserts into paradise. And though he begged water at Jacob's well, yet Jacob drank at his: for at his charge all Jacob's flocks and family were sustained, and by him Jacob's posterity were made honourable and redeemed. But because this 'well was deep,' and the woman 'had nothing to draw water with,' and of herself could not fathom so great a depth, therefore she refused him; just as we do, when we refuse to give drink to a thirsty disciple. Christ comes in that humble manner of address, under the veil of poverty or contempt; and we cannot see Christ from under that robe, and we send him away without an alms: little considering, that when he begs an alms of us, in the instance of any of his poor relatives, he asks of us but to give him occasion to give a blessing for an alms. Thus do the ministers of religion ask support; but when the

laws are not more just than many of the people are charitable, they shall fare as their Master did : they shall preach, but unless they can draw water themselves, they shall not drink. But, *si scirent*, if men did but know who it is that asks them, that it is Christ, either in his ministers, or Christ in his poor servants, certainly they could not be so obstructed in the issues of their justice and charity ; but would remember, that no honour could be greater, no love more fortunate, than to meet with an opportunity to be expressed in so noble a manner, that God himself is pleased to call his own relief.

5. When the disciples had returned from the town, whither they went to buy provision, they wondered to see the Master talking alone with the woman. They knew he never did so before ; they had observed him to be of a reserved deportment, and not only innocent, but secure from the dangers of malice and suspicion, in the matter of incontinence. The Jews were a jealous and forward people ; and as nothing will more blast the reputation of a prophet than effeminacy and wanton affections, so he knew no crime was sooner objected or harder cleared than that : of which, because commonly it is acted in privacy, men look for no probation, but pregnant circumstances and arguments of suspect ; so nothing can wash it off, until a man can prove a negative : and if he could, yet he is guilty enough in the estimate of the vulgar for having been accused. But then, because nothing is so destructive of the reputation of a governor, so contradictory to the authority and dignity of his person, as the low and baser appetites of uncleanness, and the consequent shame and scorn ; (insomuch that David, having fallen into it, prayed

God to confirm or establish him *spiritu principali*, with the spirit of a prince, the spirit of lust being uningenuous and slavish;) the holy Jesus, who was to establish a new law in the authority of his person, was highly curious so to demean himself, that he might be a person incapable of any such suspicions, and of a temper apt not only to answer the calumny, but also to prevent the jealousy. But yet, now he had a great design in hand, he meant to reveal to the Samaritans the coming of the Messiah; and to this his discourse with the woman was instrumental. And in imitation of our great Master, spiritual persons, and the guides of others have been very prudent and reserved in their societies and intercourse with women. Heretics have served their ends upon the impotency of the sex, and having 'led captive silly women,' led them about as triumphs of lust; and knew no scandal greater than the scandal of heresy, and therefore sought not to decline any, but were infamous in their unwary and lustful mixtures. Simon Magus had his Helena partner of his lust and heresy; the author of the sect of the Nicolaitans (if St. Jerome was not misinformed) had troops of women; Marcion sent a woman as his emissary to Rome; Apelles had his Philomene; Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla; Donatus was served by Lucilla; Elpidius by Agape, Priscillian by Galla; and Arius spreads his nets by opportunity of his conversation with the prince's sister, and first he corrupted her, then he seduced the world.

6. But holy persons, preachers of true religion and holy doctrines, although they were careful by public homilies to instruct the female disciples, that they who are heirs together with us of the same

hope, may be servants in the same discipline and institution; yet they remitted them to their husbands and guardians, to be taught at home.¹ And when any personal transactions concerning the needs of their spirit were of necessity to intervene between the priest and a woman, the action was done most commonly under public test, or if in private, yet with much caution and observation of circumstance, which might as well prevent suspicion, as preserve their innocence. Conversation and frequent and familiar address does too much rifle the ligaments and reverence of spiritual authority, and amongst the best persons is matter of danger. When the cedars of Libanus have been observed to fall, when David and Solomon have been dishonoured, he is a bold man that will venture further than he is sent in an errand by necessity, or invited by charity, or warranted by prudence. I deny not but some persons have made holy friendships with women: St. Athanasius with a devout and religious virgin, St. Chrysostom with Olympia, St. Jerome with Paula Romana, St. John with the elect lady, St. Peter and St. Paul with Petronilla and Thecla. And therefore it were a jealousy beyond the suspicion of monks and eunuchs, to think it impossible to have a chaste conversation with a distinct sex. 1, A pure and right intention; 2, an intercourse not extended beyond necessity or holy ends; 3, a short stay; 4, great modesty; 5, and the business of religion, will by God's grace hallow the visit, and preserve the friendship in its being spiritual, that it may not degenerate into carnal affection. And yet these are only advices useful when there is

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

danger in either of the persons, or some scandal incident to the profession, that to some persons and in the conjunction of many circumstances are oftentimes not considerable.

7. When Jesus had resolved to reveal himself to the woman, he first gives her occasion to reveal herself to him, fairly insinuating an opportunity to confess her sins, that having purged herself from her impurity, she might be apt to entertain the article of the revelation of the Messias. And indeed a crime in our manners is the greatest indisposition of our understanding to entertain the truth and doctrine of the gospel; especially when the revelation contests against the sin, and professes open hostility to the lust: for faith being the gift of God and an illumination, the Spirit of God will not give this light to them that prefer their darkness before it; either the will must open the windows, or the light of faith will not shine into the chamber of the soul. ‘How can ye believe, (said our blessed Saviour) that receive honour one of another?’¹ Ambition and faith, believing God and seeking of ourselves, are incompetent and totally impossible. And therefore Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, spake like an angel, (saith Socrates,) saying, “That the mind which feedeth upon spiritual knowledge must thoroughly be cleansed. The irascible faculty must first be cured with brotherly love and charity, and the concupiscible must be suppressed with continency and mortification.”² Then may the understanding apprehend the mysteriousness of Christianity: for since Christianity is a holy doctrine, if there be any remanent affec-

¹ John, v. 44.

² Lib. iv. Hist. c. xxiii.

tions to a sin, there is in the soul a party disaffected to the entertainment of the institution, and we usually believe what we have a mind to. Our understandings, if a crime be lodged in the will, being like icterical eyes, transmitting the species to the soul with prejudice, disaffection, and colours of their own framing. If a preacher should discourse that there ought to be a parity amongst Christians, and that their goods ought to be in common, all men will apprehend that not princes and rich persons, but the poor and the servants, would soonest become the disciples, and believe the doctrines, because they are the only persons likely to get by them : and it concerns the other not to believe him, the doctrine being destructive of their interests. Just such a persuasion is every persevering love to a vicious habit ; it having possessed the understanding with fair opinions of it, and surprised the will with passion and desires, whatsoever doctrine is its enemy will with infinite difficulty be entertained. And we know a great experience of it in the article of the Messias dying on the cross, which though infinitely true, yet, because ' to the Jews it was a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness,' it could not be believed, they remaining in that indisposition ; that is, unless the will were first set right, and they willing to believe any truth, though for it they must disclaim their interest. Their understanding was blind, because the heart was hardened, and could not receive the impression of the greatest moral demonstration in the world.

8. The holy Jesus asked water of the woman, unsatisfying water ; but promised that himself, to them that ask him, would give waters of life, and satisfaction infinite : so distinguishing the pleasures

and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual. Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap, and do not gather in; or gather in, and do not possess; or possess, but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy we are still unsatisfied, it is with anguish of spirit and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches makes neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our beverage more pleasant; and it feeds the eye, but never fills it, but, like drink to an hydropic person, increases the thirst, and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard-seed, fills the furrows of the heart; and as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction, but carries content and fulness all the way: and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity: the soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more, not because it wanted any, but that it can now hold more, is more receptive of felicities. And in every minute of sanctification there is so excellent a condition of joy and high satisfaction, that the very calamities, the afflictions and persecutions of the world are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient; like a drop of water falling into a tun of wine, it is ascribed into a new family, losing its own nature by a conversion into the more noble: for now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remanent that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit, and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the

throne, whither when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters which were given us to drink, when with the rod of God the rock Christ Jesus was smitten. The Spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters : and when the angel of the covenant bath stirred the pool, whoever descends thither shall find health and peace, joys spiritual, and the satisfactions of eternity.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, fountain of eternal life, thou spring of joy and spiritual satisfactions, let the holy stream of blood and water issuing from thy sacred side cool the thirst, soften the hardness, and refresh the barrenness of my desert soul ; that I, thirsting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool stream, may despise all the vainer complacencies of this world, refuse all societies but such as are safe, pious, and charitable, mortify all sottish appetites, and may desire nothing but thee, seek none but thee, and rest in thee with entire dereliction of my own caitive inclinations ; that the desires of nature may pass into desires of grace, and my thirst and my hunger may be spiritual, and my hopes placed in thee, and the expresses of my charity upon thy relatives, and all the parts of my life may speak my love and obedience to thy commandments : that thou possessing my soul and all its faculties during my whole life, I may possess thy glories in the fruition of a blessed eternity ; by the light of thy gospel here and the streams of thy grace being guided to thee, the fountain of life and glory, there to be inebriated with the waters of Paradise, with joy, and love, and contemplation, adoring and admiring the beauties of the Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

*Considerations upon Christ's first Preaching, and the
Accidents happening about that time.*

1. WHEN John was cast into prison, then began Jesus to preach ; not only because the ministry of John, by order of divine designation, was to precede the publication of Jesus, but also upon prudent considerations and designs of Providence, lest two great personages at once upon the theatre of Palestine might have been occasion of divided thoughts, and these have determined upon a schism, some professing themselves to be of Christ, some of John; for once an offer was made of a dividing question, by the spite of the Pharisees: ‘ Why do the disciples of John fast often, and thy disciples fast not?’ But when John went off from the scene, then Jesus appeared like the sun in succession to the morning star; and there were no divided interests upon mistake, or the fond adherences of the followers. And although the holy Jesus would certainly have cured all accidental inconveniences which might have happened in such accidents, yet this may become a precedent to all prelates, to be prudent in avoiding all occasions of a schism, and rather than divide a people, submit and relinquish an opportunity of preaching to their inferiors, as knowing that God is better served by charity than a homily; and if my modesty made me resign to my inferior, the advantages of honour to God by the cessions of humility are of greater consideration than the smaller and accidental advantages of better-penned and more accurate discourses. But our blessed Lord, designing to gather disciples, did it in the manner of the more extraordinary persons

and doctors of the Jews, and particularly of the Baptist: he initiated them into the institution by the solemnity of a baptism; but yet he was pleased not to minister it in his own person. His apostles were baptized in John's baptism, said Tertullian;¹ or else St. Peter only was baptized by his Lord, and he baptized the rest. However, the Lord was pleased to depute the ministry of his servants, that so he might constitute a ministry; that he might reserve it to himself as a speciality to baptize with the Spirit, as his servants did with water; that he might declare that the efficacy of the rite did not depend upon the dignity of the minister, but his own institution and the holy covenant; and lastly, lest they who were baptized by him in person might please themselves above their brethren, whose needs were served by a lower ministry.

2. The holy Jesus, the great physician of our souls, now entering upon his cure and the diocese of Palestine, which was afterwards enlarged to the pale of the catholic church, was curious to observe all advantages of prudence for the benefit of souls, by the choice of place; by quitting the place of his education, which, because it had been poor and humble, was apt to procure contempt to his doctrine, and despite to his person; by fixing in Capernaum, which had the advantage of popularity, and the opportunity of extending the benefit, yet had not the honour and ambition of Jerusalem; that the ministers of religion might be taught to seek and desire employment in such circumstances which may serve the end of God, but not of ambition; to promote the interest of souls, but not the

¹ Lib. de Baptism.

inordination of lower appetites. Jesus quitted his natural and civil interests, when they were less consistent with the end of God and his prophetic office; and considered not his mother's house and the vicinage in the accounts of religion, beyond those other places in which he might better do his Father's work. In which a forward piety might behold the insinuation of a duty to such persons, who by rights of law and custom were so far instrumental to the cure of souls, as to design the persons; they might do but duty if they first considered the interests of souls before the advantages of their kindred and relatives. And although, if all things else be alike, they may in equal dispositions prefer their own before strangers, yet it were but reason that they should first consider sadly if the men be equal, before they remember that they are of their kindred, and not let this consideration be an ingredient into the former judgment. And another degree of liberty yet there is: if our kindred be persons apt and holy, and without exceptions either of law, or prudence, or religion, we may do them advantages before others who have some degrees of learning and improvement beyond the other: or else no man might lawfully prefer his kindred, unless they were absolutely the ablest in a diocese or kingdom; which doctrine were a snare; apt to produce scruples to the consciences rather than advantages to the cure. But then also patrons should be careful that they do not account their clerks by an estimate taken from comparison with unworthy candidates, set up on purpose, that when we choose our kindred, we may abuse our consciences, by saying, we have fulfilled our trust, and made election of the more worthy. In these

and the like cases, let every man who is concerned deal with justice, nobleness, and sincerity, with the simplicity of a Christian, and the wisdom of a man; without tricks and stratagems, to disadvantage the church by doing temporal advantages to his friend or family.

3. The blessed Master began his office with a sermon of repentance, as his decessor, John the Baptist, did in his ministration; to tell the world that the new covenant, which was to be established by the mediation and office of the holy Jesus, was a covenant of grace and favour, not established upon works, but upon promises, and remission of right on God's part, and remission of sins on our part. The law was a covenant of works; and whoever prevaricated any of its sanctions in a considerable degree, he stood sentenced by it without any hopes of restitution supplied by the law. And therefore it was the covenant of works, not because good works were then required more than now, or because they had more efficacy than now; but because all our hopes did rely upon the perfection of works and innocence, without the suppletories of grace, pardon, and repentance. But the gospel is therefore a covenant of grace, not that works are excluded from our duty, or from co-operating to heaven, but that, because there is in it so much mercy, the imperfections of the works are made up by the grace of Jesus, and the defects of innocence are supplied by the substitution of repentance. Abatements are made for the infirmities and miseries of humanity; and if we do our endeavour now, after the manner of men, the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, conformity to his laws, and submission to his doctrine, entitles us to the grace he hath pur-

chased for us; that is, our sins for his sake shall be pardoned. So that the law and the gospel are not opposed barely upon the title of faith and works, but as the covenant of faith and the covenant of works. In the faith of a Christian works are the great ingredient and the chief of the constitution; but the gospel is not a covenant of works; that is, it is not an agreement upon the stock of innocence without allowances of repentance, requiring obedience in rigour and strictest estimate. But the gospel requires the holiness of a Christian, and yet after the manner of a man: for, always provided that we do not allow to ourselves a liberty, but endeavour with all our strength, and love with all our soul, that which, if it were upon our allowance, would be required at our hands, now that it is against our will, and highly contested against, is put upon the stock of Christ, and allowed to us by God in the accounts of pardon by the merits of Jesus, by the covenant of the gospel. And this is the repentance and remission of sins which John first preached upon the approximation of the kingdom, and Christ at the first manifestation of it, and the apostles afterward in the name of Jesus.

4. Jesus now having begun his preaching, began also to gather his family; and first called Simon and Andrew, then James and John; at whose vocation he wrought a miracle, which was a signification of their office, and the success of it; a draught of fishes so great and prodigious, that it convinced them that he was a person very extraordinary, whose voice the fishes heard, and came at his call: and since he designed them to become fishers of men, although themselves were as unlikely instruments to persuade men as the voice of

the Son of man to command fishes, yet they should prevail in so great numbers, that the whole world should run after them, and upon their summons come into the net of the gospel, becoming disciples of the glorious Nazarene. St. Peter, the first time that he threw his net, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecost, caught three thousand men; and at one sermon sometimes the princes of a nation have been converted, and the whole land presently baptized; and the multitudes so great, that the apostles were forced to design some men to the ministration of baptism, by way of peculiar office; and it grew to be work enough, the easiness of the ministry being made busy and full of employment where a whole nation became disciples. And indeed the doctrine is so holy, the principle so divine, the instruments so supernatural, the promises so glorious, the revelation so admirable, the rites so mysterious, the whole fabric of the discipline so full of wisdom, persuasion, and energy, that the infinite numbers of the first conversions were not so great a wonder, as that there are so few now: every man calling himself Christian, but few having that power of godliness which distinguishes Christian from a word and an empty name. And the word is now the same, and the arguments greater, (for some have been growing ever since, as the prophecies have been fulfilled,) and the sermons more, and the spirit the same; and yet such diversity of operations, that we hear and read the sermons and dictates evangelical, as we do a romance, but that it is with less passion, but altogether as much unconcerned as with a story of Salmanasar or Ibrahim Bassa. For we do not leave one vice, nor reject one lust, nor deny

one impetuous temptation the more for the four gospels' sake, and all St. Paul's epistles mingled in the argument. And yet all think themselves fishes within Christ's net, and the prey of the gospel. And it is true they are so; for 'the kingdom is like unto a net, which inclosed fishes good and bad:' but this shall be of small advantage, when the net shall be drawn to the shore, and the separation made.

5. When Jesus called those disciples, they had been 'fishing all night and caught nothing;' but when Christ bade them 'let down the net,' they took multitudes: to show to us that the success of our endeavours is not in proportion to our labours, but the divine assistance and benediction. It is not the excellency of the instrument, but the capacity of the subject, nor yet this alone, but the aptness of the application, nor that without an influence from heaven, can produce the fruits of a holy persuasion and conversion. 'Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God gives the increase.' Indeed, when we let down the nets at the divine appointment, the success is the more probable, and certainly God will bring benefit to the place, or honour to himself, or salvation to them that will obey, or conviction to them that will not: but whatever the fruit be in respect of others, the reward shall be great to themselves. And therefore St. Paul did not say he had profited, but, 'he had laboured more than they all,' as knowing the divine acceptance would take its account in proportion to our endeavours and intendments; not by commensuration to the effect, which being without us, depending upon God's blessing and the co-operation of the recipients, can be no ingredient into

our account. But this also may help to support the weariness of our hopes, and the protraction and deferring of our expectation, if a laborious prelate and an assiduous preacher have but few returns to his many cares and greater labours. A whole night a man may labour, (the longest life is no other,) and yet catch nothing; and then the Lord may visit us with his special presence, and more forward assistance, and the harvest may grow up with the swiftness of a gourd, and the fruitfulness of olives, and the plaisance of the vine, and the strength of wheat; and whole troops of penitents may arise from the darkness of their graves at the call of one sermon, even when he pleases: and till then we must be content that we do our duty, and lay the consideration of the effect at the feet of Jesus.

6. In the days of the patriarchs, the governors of the Lord's people were called shepherds; so was Moses, and so was David. In the days of the gospel they are shepherds still, but with the addition of a new appellative, for now they are called fishers. Both the callings were honest, humble and laborious, watchful and full of trouble; but now that both the titles are conjunct, we may observe the symbol of an implicit and folded duty. There is much simplicity and care in the shepherd's trade; there is much craft and labour in the fisher's: and a prelate is to be both full of piety to his flock, and careful of their welfare; and, because in the political and spiritual sense too, feeding and governing are the same duty, it concerns them that have cure of souls to be discreet and wary, observant of advantages, laying such baits for the people as may entice them into the

nets of Jesus's discipline. 'But being crafty I caught you,' saith St. Paul, for he was a fisher too. And so must spiritual persons be fishers to all spiritual senses of watchfulness, and care, and prudence: only they must not fish for preferment and ambitious purposes, but must say with the king of Sodom, *Date nobis animus, cætera vos tollite*; which St. Paul renders, 'We seek not yours, but you.' And in order to such acquist, the purchase of souls, let them have the diligence and the craft of the fishers, the watchfulness and care of shepherds, the prudence of politics, the tenderness of parents, the spirit of government, the wariness of observation, great knowledge of the dispositions of their people, and experience of such advantages by means of which they may serve the ends of God and of salvation upon their souls.

7. When Peter had received the fruits of a rich miracle, in the prodigious and prosperous draught of fishes, he instantly 'falls down at the feet of Jesus,' and confesses himself a sinner, and unworthy the presence of Christ. In which confession I not only consider the conviction of his understanding by the testimony of the miracle, but the modesty of his spirit, who in his exaltation, and the joy of a sudden and happy success, retired into humility and consideration of his own unworthiness; lest, as it happens in sudden joys, the lavishness of his spirit should transport him to intemperance, to looser affections, to vanity and garishness, less becoming the severity and government of a disciple of so great a master. For in such great and sudden accidents, men usually are dissolved and melted into joy and inconsideration, and let fly all their severe principles and discipline

of manners, till, as Peter here did, though to another purpose, they say to Christ, 'Depart from me O Lord:' as if such excellencies of joys, like the lesser stars, did disappear at the presence of him, who is the fountain of all joys regular and just. When the spirits of the body have been bound up by the cold winter air, the warmth of the spring makes so great an aperture of the passages, and by consequence such dissolution of spirits, in the presence of the sun, that it becomes the occasion of fevers and violent diseases: just such a thing is sudden joy, in which the spirits leap out from their cells of austerity and sobriety, and are warmed into fevers and wildnesses, and forfeiture of all judgment and vigorous understanding. In these accidents the best advice is, to temper and allay our joys with some instant consideration of the vilest of our sins,¹ the shamefulfulness of our disgraces, the most dolorous accidents of our lives, the worst of our fears, with meditation of death, of the terrors of doomsday, or the unimaginable misery of a series of damned and accursed spirits. For such considerations as these are good instruments of sobriety, and are correctives to the malignity of excessive joys or temporal prosperities, which, like minerals, unless allayed by art, prey upon the spirits, and become the union of a contradiction being turned into mortal medicines.

8. At this time 'Jesus preached to the people from the ship,' which, in the fancies and tropic discourses of the old doctors, signifies the church and declares that the homilies of order and authority must be delivered from the oracle: they that

¹ Simul et quod gaudes et quod times contrahe. Seneca.

preach must be sent, and God hath appointed tutors and instructors of our consciences by special designation and peculiar appointment. If they that preach do not make their sermons from the ship, their discourses either are the false murmurs of heretics and false shepherds, or else of thieves and invaders of authority, or corrupters of discipline and order. For God, that loves to hear us in special places, will also be heard himself by special persons: and since he sent his angels ministers to convey his purposes of old, then when 'the law was ordained by angels, as by the hands of a mediator;' now also he will send his servants the sons of men, since the new law was ordained by the Son of man, who is the Mediator between God and man in the new covenant. And therefore in the ship Jesus preached; but he had first caused it to put off from the land, to represent to us, that the ship in which we preach must be put off from the vulgar communities of men, separate from the people, by the designation of special appointment and of special holiness: that is, they neither must be common men, nor of common lives, but consecrated by order, and hallowed by holy living; lest the person want authority in destitution of a divine character, and his doctrine lose its energy and power when the life is vulgar, and hath nothing in it holy and extraordinary.

9. The holy Jesus in the choice of his apostles was resolute and determined to make election of persons bold and confident; (for so the Galileans were observed naturally to be, and Peter was the boldest of the twelve, and a good sword-man, till

¹ Gal. iii. 19.

the spirit of his Master had fastened his sword within the scabbard, and charmed his spirit into quietness;) but he never chose any of the Scribes and Pharisees, none of the doctors of the law, but persons ignorant and unlearned. Which, in designs and institutions whose divinity is not demonstrated from other arguments, would seem an art of concealment and distrust. But in this, which derives its rays from the fountain of wisdom most openly and infallibly, it is a contestation against the powers of the world upon the interests of God, that he who does all the work might have all the glory, and in the productions in which he is fain to make the instruments themselves, and give them capacity and activity, every part of the operation and causality and effect may give to God the same honour he had from the creation, for his being the only workman; with the addition of those degrees of excellency, which, in the work of redemption of man, are beyond that of his creation and first being.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, Lord of the creatures, and Prince of the catholic church, to whom all creatures obey, in acknowledgment of thy supreme dominion, and all according to thy disposition co-operate to the advancement of thy kingdom, be pleased to order the affairs and accidents of the world, that all things in their capacity may do the work of the gospel, and co-operate to the good of the elect, and retrench the growth of vice, and advance the interests of virtue. Make all the states and orders of men disciples of thy holy institution: let princes worship thee and defend religion; let thy clergy do thee honour by personal zeal, and vigilancy over their flocks; let all the

world submit to the scepter, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgments, and revere thy laws. And in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosure of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice, and obey thy call, and entertain thy holy Spirit, and improve my talents ; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church ; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore, and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom, but be admitted into the societies of saints, and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE IX.

Of Repentance.

1. THE whole doctrine of the gospel is comprehended by the Holy Ghost in these two summaries, faith and repentance ;¹ that those two potent and imperious faculties which command our lower powers, which are the fountain of actions, the occasion and capacity of laws, and the title to reward or punishment, the will and the understanding ; that is, the whole man considered in his superior faculties, may become subjects of the kingdom, servants of Jesus, and heirs of glory. Faith supplies our imperfect conceptions, and corrects our ignorance, making us to distinguish good from evil, not only by the proportions of reason, and custom, and old laws, but by the new standard of the gospel ; it teaches us all those duties which

¹ Acts, xx. 21.

were enjoined us in order to a participations of mighty glories; it brings our understanding into subjection, making us apt to receive the Spirit for our guide, Christ for our Master, the gospel for our rule, the laws of Christianity for our measure of good and evil; and it supposes us naturally ignorant, and comes to supply those defects which in our understandings were left after the spoils of innocence and wisdom made in Paradise upon Adam's prevarication, and continued and increased by our neglect, evil customs, voluntary deceptions, and infinite prejudices. And as faith presupposes our ignorance, so repentance presupposes our malice and iniquity. The whole design of Christ's coming and the doctrines of the gospel being to recover us from a miserable condition, from ignorance to spiritual wisdom, by the conduct of faith; and from a vicious, habitually-depraved life and ungodly manners to the purity of the sons of God, by the instrument of repentance.

2. And this is a loud publication of the excellency and glories of the gospel, and the felicities of man over all the other instances of creation. The angels, who were more excellent spirits than human souls, were not comprehended and made safe within a covenant and provisions of repentance. Their first act of volition was their whole capacity of a blissful or miserable eternity: they made their own sentence when they made their first election; and having such excellent knowledge, and no weaknesses to prejudge and trouble their choice, what they first did was not capable of repentance; because they had at first, in their intuition and sight, all which could afterwards bring them to repentance: but weak man, who knows

first by elements, and after long study learns a syllable, and in good time gets a word, could not at first know all those things which were sufficient or apt to determine his choice; but as he grew to understand more, saw more reasons to rescind his first elections. The angels had a full peremptory will and a satisfied understanding at first, and therefore were not to mend their first act by a second contradictory. But poor man hath a will always strongest when his understanding is weakest, and chooseth most when he is least able to determine; and therefore is most passionate in his desires, and follows his object with greatest earnestness, when he is blindest, and hath the least reason so to do: and therefore God, pitying man, begins to reckon his choices to be criminal, just in the same degree as he gives him understanding. The violences and unreasonable actions of childhood are no more remembered by God, than they are understood by the child. The levities and passions of youth are not aggravated by the imputation of malice, but are sins of a lighter dye, because reason is not yet impressed and marked upon them with characters and tincture in grain: but he who (when he may choose, because he understands) shall choose the evil and reject the good, stands marked with a deep guilt, and hath no excuse left to him, but as his degrees of ignorance left his choice the more imperfect: and because every sinner, in the style of Scripture, is a fool, and hath an election as imperfect as is the action; that is, as great a declension from prudence as it is from piety, and the man understands as imperfectly as he practices; therefore God sent his Son

to 'take upon him (not the nature of angels, but) the seed of Abraham,'¹ and to propound salvation upon such terms as were possible; that is, upon such a piety which relies upon experience, and trial of good and evil; and hath given us leave, if we choose amiss at first, to choose again, and choose better; Christ having undertaken to pay for the issues of our first follies, to make up the breach made by our first weaknesses and abused understandings.

3. But as God gave us this mercy by Christ, so he also revealed it by him. He first used the authority of a lord, and a creator, and a lawgiver; he required obedience indeed upon reasonable terms, upon the instance of but a few commandments at first, which, when he afterwards multiplied, he also appointed ways to expiate the smaller irregularities; but left them eternally bound without remedy who should do any great violence or crime. But then he bound them but to a temporal death. Only this, as an eternal death was also tacitly implied, so also a remedy was secretly ministered, and repentance particularly preached by homilies distinct from the covenant of Moses's law. The law allowed no repentance for greater crimes; 'he that was convicted of adultery was to die without mercy:'² but God pitied the miseries of man, and the inconveniences of the law, and sent Christ to suffer for the one, and remedy the other. 'For so it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.'³

¹ Heb. ii. 16.

² Lev. xx. 10.

³ Luke, xxiv. 46, 47.

And now this is the last and only hope of man, who in his natural condition is imperfect, in his customs vicious, in his habits impotent and criminal. Because man did not remain innocent, it became necessary he should be penitent, and that this penitence should by some means be made acceptable; that is, become the instrument of his pardon, and restitution of his hope. Which, because it is an act of favour, and depends wholly upon the divine dignation, and was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, who was made not only the prophet and preacher, but the Mediator of this new covenant and mercy; it was necessary we should become disciples of the holy Jesus, and servants of his institution; that is, run to him, to be made partakers of the mercies of this new covenant, and accept of him such conditions as he should require of us.

4. This covenant is then consigned to us when we first come to Christ; that is, when we first profess ourselves his disciples and his servants, disciples of his doctrine, and servants of his institution; that is, in baptism, in which Christ who died for our sins makes us partakers of his death. For 'we are buried by baptism into his death,'¹ saith St. Paul. Which was also represented in ceremony, by the immersion appointed to be the rite of that sacrament: and then it is that God pours forth, together with the sacramental waters, a salutary and holy fountain of grace, to wash the soul from all its stains and impure adherences: and therefore this first access to Christ is in the style of Scripture called 'regeneration,' the 'new birth,' 'redemption,' 'renovation,' 'expiation,' or 'atonement with God,'

¹ Rom. vi. 4.

and 'justification.'¹ And these words in the New Testament relate principally and properly to the abolition of sins committed before baptism: for we are 'justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past: to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness:'² and this is that which St. Paul calls 'justification by faith,'³ that 'boasting might be excluded,'⁴ and the grace of God by Jesus made exceeding glorious: for this being the proper work of Christ, the first entertainment of a disciple, and manifestation of that state which is first given him as a favour, and next intended as a duty, is a total abolition of the precedent guilt of sin, and leaves nothing remaining that can condemn: we then freely receive the entire and perfect effect of that atonement which Christ made for us, we are put into a condition of innocence and favour. And this, I say, is done regularly in baptism; and St. Paul expresses it to this sense: after he had enumerated a series of vices subjected in many, he adds, 'and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified.'⁵ There is nothing of the old guilt remanent: when 'ye were washed, ye were sanctified;' or, as the Scripture calls it in another place, 'ye were redeemed from your vain conversation.'⁶

5. For this grace was the formality of the covenant: 'Repent, and believe the gospel.'⁷ 'Repent, and be converted,' (so it is in St. Peter's sermon,) 'and your sins shall be done away ;'⁸ that

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 21; Rom. v. 1; Tit. iii. 5, 7; Rom. iii. 26; Gal. ii. 16.

² Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

³ Ibid. verse 28.

⁴ Ibid. verse 27.

⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 11.

⁶ 1 Pet. i. 18.

⁷ Mar. i. 15.

⁸ Acts, iii. 19.

was the covenant. But that Christ chose baptism for its signature appears in the parallel, 'Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins.'¹ 'For Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.'² The sanctification is integral, the pardon is universal and immediate.

6. But here the process is short, no more at first but this, 'Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins.' Which baptism, because it was speedily administered, and yet not without the preparatives of faith and repentance, it is certain those predispositions were but instruments of reception, actions of great facility, of small employment, and such as, supposing the person not unapt, did confess the infiniteness of the divine mercy, and fulness of the redemption;³ and is called by the apostle, 'a being justified freely.'⁴

7. Upon this ground it is, that by the doctrine of the church heathen persons, 'strangers from the covenant of grace,' were invited to a confession of faith, and dereliction of false religions, with a promise that at the very first resignation of their persons to the service of Jesus, they should obtain full pardon. It was St. Cyprian's counsel to old Demetrianus, "Now, in the evening of thy days, when thy soul is almost expiring, repent of thy sins, believe in Jesus, and turn Christian; and although

¹ Acts, ii. 38; Mar. xvi. 16. ² Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.

³ Justin Mart. Dial. cum. Tryph. Act. vii. 37; x. 47; xvi. 33.

⁴ Rom. iii. 24.

thou art almost in the embraces of death, yet thou shalt be comprehended of immortality." *Baptizatus ad horam securus hinc exit*, saith Austin, "a baptized person dying immediately shall live eternally and gloriously." And this was the case of the thief upon the cross: he confessed Christ, and repented of his sins, and begged pardon, and did acts enough to facilitate his first access to Christ, and but to remove the hinderances of God's favour: then he was redeemed and reconciled to God by the death of Jesus; that is, he was pardoned with a full, instantaneous, integral and clear pardon; with such pardon which declared the glory of God's mercies, and the infiniteness of Christ's merits, and such as required a mere reception and entertainment on man's part.

8. But then we, having received so great a favour, enter into a covenant to correspond with a proportionable endeavour; the benefit of absolute pardon, that is, salvation of our souls, being not to be received till 'the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;' all the interval we have promised to live a holy life, in obedience to the whole discipline of Jesus. That is the condition on our part; and if we prevaricate that the mercy shown to the blessed thief is no argument of hope to us, because he was saved by the mercies of the first access, which corresponds to the remission of sins we receive in baptism; and we shall perish by breaking our own promises and obligations which Christ passed upon us, when he made with us the covenant of an entire and gracious pardon.

9. For in the precise covenant there is nothing else described but pardon so given and ascertained

¹ Acts, iii. 19.

upon an obedience persevering to the end. And this is clear in all those places of Scripture which express a holy and innocent life to have been the purpose and design of Christ's death for us, and redemption of us from the former estate. 'Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed.'¹ [*Exinde*] from our being 'healed,' from our 'dying unto sin,' from our being 'buried with Christ,' from our being 'baptized into his death;' the end of Christ's dying for us is, 'that we should live unto righteousness.' Which was also highly and prophetically expressed by St. Zachary in his divine ecstasy:— 'This was the oath which he swore to our forefather Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.'² And St. Paul discourses to this purpose pertinently and largely: 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,' [*Hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus*, saith Tertullian, "Those are the evil angels, the devil and his works, which we deny or renounce in baptism,"] 'we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;'³—that is, lead a whole life in the pursuit of universal 'holiness.' (Sobriety, justice, and godliness being the proper language to signify our religion and respects to God, to our neighbours, and to ourselves.) And that this was

¹ Vide part iii. Consid. of Crucifix. of Jesus, 1 Pet. ii. 4.

² Luke, i. 73, &c.

³ Tit. ii. 11, 12.

the very end of our dying in baptism, and the design of Christ's manifestation of our redemption, he adds, 'Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus, who gave himself for us to this very purpose, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'¹ Purifying a people peculiar to himself is cleansing it in the laver of regeneration, and appropriating it to himself in the rites of admission and profession. Which plainly designs the first consignation of our redemption to be in baptism; and that Christ there 'cleansing' his church 'from every spot or wrinkle,' made a covenant with us, that we should renounce all our sins, and he should cleanse them all, and then that we should abide in that state. Which is also very explicitly set down by the same apostle in that divine and mysterious epistle to the Romans: 'How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?' 'Well, what then?' 'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' That is the end and mysteriousness of baptism, it is a consignation into the death of Christ, and we die with him that once; that is, die to sin, that we may for ever after live the life of righteousness. 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;'² that is,

¹ Tit. ii. 13, 14.² Rom. vi. 2, 3, 4.³ Ib. vi. 6.

from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. And, therefore, God, who knows the weaknesses on our part, and yet the strictness and necessity of conserving baptismal grace by the covenant evangelical, hath appointed the auxiliaries of the Holy Spirit to be ministered to all baptized people in the holy rite of confirmation, that it might be made possible to be done by divine aids, which is necessary to be done by the divine commandments.

10. And this might not be improperly said to be the meaning of those words of our blessed Saviour, 'He that speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him:' that is, those sins which were committed in infidelity, before we became disciples of the Holy Jesus, are to be remitted in baptism and our first profession of the religion; but the sins committed after baptism and confirmation, in which we receive the Holy Ghost, and by which the Holy Spirit is grieved, are to be accounted for with more severity. And, therefore, the primitive church, understanding our obligations according to this discourse, admitted not any to holy orders who had lapsed and fallen into any sin of which she could take cognizance, that is, such who had not kept the integrity of their baptism; but sins committed before baptism, were no impediments to the susception of orders, because they were absolutely extinguished in baptism. This is the nature of the covenant we made in baptism, that is, the grace of the gospel, and the effect of faith and repentance; and it is expected we should so remain. For it is nowhere expressed to

be the mercy and intention of the covenant evangelical, that this redemption should be any more than once ; or that repentance, which is in order to it, can be renewed to the same or so great purposes and present effects.

11. But after we are once reconciled in baptism, and put entirely into God's favour, when we have once been redeemed, if we then fall away into sin, we must expect God's dealing with us in another manner and to other purposes. Never must we expect to be so again justified, and upon such terms as formerly ; the best days of our repentance are interrupted. Not that God will never forgive them that sin after baptism, and recover by repentance ; but that restitution by repentance after baptism is another thing than the first redemption. No such entire, clear, and integral, determinate, and presential effects of repentance ; but an imperfect, little, growing, uncertain, and hazardous reconciliation ; a repentance that is always in production, a renovation by parts, a pardon that is revocable, a salvation to be wrought by fear and trembling : all our remanent life must be in bitterness, our hopes alloyed with fears, our meat attempered with coloquintida, and death is in the pot. As our best actions are imperfect, so our greatest graces are but possibilities and aptnesses to a reconcilment, and all our life we are working ourselves into that condition we had in baptism, and lost by our relapse. As the habit lessens, so does the guilt ; as our virtues are imperfect, so is the pardon : and because our piety may be interrupted, our state is uncertain, till our possibilities of sin are ceased, till our fight is finished, and the victory therefore made

sure, because there is no more fight. And it is remarkable, that St. Peter gives counsel to live holily in pursuance of our redemption, of our calling, and of our escaping from that corruption that is in the world through lust, lest we lose the benefit of our purgation,¹ to which, by way of anti-thesis, he opposes this : ‘ Wherefore the rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure ;’² and, ‘ if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.’³ Meaning, by the perpetuating our state of baptism and first repentance we shall never fall, but be in a sure estate ; our calling and election shall be sure. But not if we fall ; ‘ if we forget we were purged from our old sins :’⁴ if we forfeit our calling, we have also made our election unsure, movable, and disputable.

12. So that now the hopes of lapsed sinners rely upon another bottom. And as in Moses’s law there was no revelation of repentance, but yet the Jews had hopes in God, and were taught the succours of repentance, by the homilies of the prophets and other accessory notices : so in the gospel the covenant was established upon faith and repentance, but it was con-signed in baptism, and was verifiable only in the integrity of a following holy life, according to the measures of a man ; not perfect, but sincere ; not faultless, but heartily endeavoured : but yet the mercy of God in pardoning sinners lapsed after baptism was declared to us by collateral and indirect occasions ; by the sermons of the apostles, and the commentaries of apostolical persons, who understood the meaning of the spirit, and the purposes of the

¹ 2 Pet. i. 4.² Ibid. i. 10.³ Vide etiam Col. i. 21, 22, 23.⁴ 2 Pet. i. 9.

divine mercy, and those other significations of his will, which the blessed Jesus left upon record in other parts of his Testament, as in codicils annexed, besides the precise Testament itself. And it is certain, if in the covenant of grace there be the same involution of an after repentance as there is of present pardon upon past repentance and future sanctity, it is impossible to justify that a holy life and a persevering sanctity is enjoined by the covenant of the gospel: if, I say, in its first intention it be declared that we may as well, and upon the same terms, hope for pardon upon a recovery hereafter, as upon the perseverance in the present condition.

13. From these premises, we may soon understand what is the duty of a Christian in all his life, even to pursue his own undertaking made in baptism, or his first access to Christ, and redemption of his person from the guilt and punishment of sins. The state of a Christian is called in Scripture 'regeneration,' 'spiritual life, walking after the spirit, walking in newness of life,' that is, 'a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.' That repentance which, tied up in the same ligament with faith, was the disposition of a Christian to his regeneration and atonement, must have holy life in perpetual succession; for that is the apt and proper fruit of the first repentance, which John the Baptist preached as an introduction to Christianity, and as an entertaining the redemption by the blood of the covenant. And all that is spoken in the New Testament is nothing but a calling upon us to do what we promised in our regeneration, to perform that which was the design of Christ, who therefore redeemed us, and 'bare our sins in his

own body, that we might die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.'

14. This is that saying of St. Paul, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you.'¹ Plainly saying, that unless we pursue the state of holiness and Christian communion into which we were baptized when we received the 'grace of God,'² we shall fail of the state of grace, and never come to see the glories of the Lord. And a little before: 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.' That is the first state of our redemption, that is 'the covenant God made with us, to remember our sins no more, and to put his laws in our hearts and minds.'³ And this was done, 'when our bodies were washed with water, and our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience;' that is, in baptism. It remains then that we persist in the condition, that we may continue our title to the covenant; for so it follows: 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for if we sin wilfully after the profession, there remains no more sacrifice:'⁴ that is, if we hold not fast the profession of our faith, and continue not the condition of the covenant, but fall into a contrary state, we have forfeited the mercies of the covenant. So that all our hopes of blessedness, relying upon the covenant made with God in Christ Jesus, are ascertained

¹ Heb. xii. 14, 15.

² Ibid. x. 16, 17.

³ Ibid. x. 22.

⁴ Ibid. x. 23, 26.

upon us, by holding fast that profession, by retaining our hearts still sprinkled from an evil conscience, by following peace with all men and holiness: for by not failing of the grace of God, we shall not fail of our hopes, the mighty price of our high calling; but without all this we shall never see the face of God.

15. To the same purpose are all those places of Scripture, which entitle us to Christ and the Spirit upon no other condition but a holy life, and a prevailing, habitual, victorious grace. 'Know you not your own selves, brethren, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?'¹ There are but two states of being in order to eternity, either a state of the inhabitation of Christ, or the state of reprobation: either Christ is in us, or we are reprobates. But what does that signify, to have 'Christ dwelling in us?' That also we learn at the feet of the same doctor: 'If Christ be in you, the body is dead by reason of sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.'² The body of sin is mortified, and the life of grace is active, busy, and spiritual, in all them who are not in the state of reprobation. The parallel with that other expression of his, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.'³ If sin be vigorous, if it be habitual, if it be beloved, if it be not dead or dying in us, we are not of Christ's portion, we belong not to him, nor he to us: 'For whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God:'⁴ that is,

¹ 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

³ Gal. v. 24.

² Rom. viii. 10.

⁴ 1 John, iii. 9.

every regenerate person is in a condition whose very being is a contradiction and an opposite design to sin. When he was regenerate and born anew of water and the Spirit, the seed of God, the original of piety, was put into him, and bidden to increase and multiply. The seed of God (in St. John) is the same with the word of God (in St. James) 'by which he begat us ;'¹ and as long as this remains, a regenerate person cannot be given up to sin ; for when he is, he quits his baptism, he renounces the covenant, he alters his relation to God in the same degree as he enters into a state of sin.

16. And yet this discourse is no otherwise to be understood than according to the design of the thing itself, and the purpose of God ; that is, that it be a deep engagement and an effectual consideration for the necessity of a holy life : but at no hand let it be made an instrument of despair, nor an argument to lessen the influences of the divine mercy. For although the nicety and limits of the covenant being consigned in baptism, are fixed upon the condition of a holy and persevering uninterrupted sanctity ; and our redemption is wrought but once, completed but once, we are but once absolutely, entirely, and presentially forgiven, and reconciled to God, this reconciliation being in virtue of the sacrifice, and this sacrifice applied in baptism is one, as baptism is one, and as the sacrifice is one ; yet the mercy of God, besides this great feast, hath fragments, which the apostles and ministers spiritual are to gather up in baskets, and minister to the after-needs of indigent and necessitous disciples.

¹ James, i. 18.

17. And this we gather, as fragments are gathered, by respersed sayings, instances and examples of the Divine mercy recorded in holy Scripture. The holy Jesus commands us to 'forgive our brother seventy times seven times,' when he asks our pardon and implores our mercy. And since the Divine mercy is the pattern of ours, and is also procured by ours, the one being made the measure of the other, by way of precedent and by way of reward, God will certainly forgive us, as we forgive our brother. And it cannot be imagined God should oblige us to give pardon oftener than he will give it himself, especially since he hath expressed ours to be a title of a proportionable reception of his; and hath also commanded us to ask pardon all days of our life, even in our daily offices, and to beg it in the measure and rule of our own charity and forgiveness to our brother. And therefore God, in his infinite wisdom foreseeing our frequent relapses, and considering our infinite infirmities, appointed in his church an ordinary ministry of pardon, designing the minister to pray for sinners, and promising to accept him in that his advocacy, or that he would open or shut heaven respectively to his act on earth; that is, he would hear his prayers, and verify his ministry, to whom he hath 'committed the word of reconciliation.' This became a duty to Christian ministers, spiritual persons, that they should 'restore a person overtaken in a fault,'¹ that is, reduce him to the condition he begins to lose: that they should 'pray over sick persons,'² who are also commanded to confess their sins; and God hath promised that

¹ Gal. vi. 1.² James, v. 14.

the sins they have committed shall be forgiven them. Thus St. Paul absolved the incestuous excommunicate Corinthian; in the person of Christ he forgave him.¹ And this also is the confidence St. John taught the Christian church upon the stock of the excellent mercy of God and propitiation of Jesus: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'² Which discourse he directs to them who were Christians, already initiated into the institution of Jesus. And the epistles which the Spirit sent to the seven Asian churches, and were particularly addressed to the bishops, the angels of those churches, are exhortations, some to perseverance, some to repentance, that 'they may return from whence they are fallen.'³ And the case is so with us, that it is impossible we should be actually and perpetually free from sin in the long succession of a busy, and impotent, and a tempted conversation. And without these reserves of the Divine grace and after-emanations from the mercy-seat, no man could be saved; and the death of Christ would become inconsiderable to most of his greatest purposes; for none should have received advantages but newly-baptized persons, whose albs of baptism served them also for a winding-sheet. And therefore our baptism, although it does consign the work of God presently to the baptized

¹ *Ἐὶ τις ἐπίσκοπος ἢ πρεσβύτερος τὸν ἐπιστρέφοντα ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας ἐ προσδέχεται, ἀλλὰ ἀποβάλλεται, καθαιρέσω, οὐκ ἂν λυκῇ Χριστὸν τὸν εἰπόντα, Χαρὰ γίνεται ἐν τῷ ἑρανῷ ἐπὶ ἐνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοῶντι.* Can. Apost. li.—"If any bishop or presbyter receives not, but puts away a penitent sinner, let him be deposed; for he thereby grieves Christ, who says, 'there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.'"

² 1 John, i. 9.

³ Apocal. ii. 5.

person in great, certain, and entire effect, in order to the remission of what is past, in case the catechumen be rightly disposed or hinders not; yet it hath also influence upon the following periods of our life, and hath admitted us into a lasting state of pardon, to be renewed and actually applied by the sacrament of the Lord's-supper, and all other ministries evangelical, and so long as our repentance is timely, active, and effective.¹

18. But now, although it is infinitely certain that the gates of mercy stand open to sinners after baptism; yet it is some variety, and greater difficulty. He that renounces Christianity, and becomes apostate from his religion, not by a seeming abjuration under a storm, but by a voluntary and hearty dereliction, he seems to have quitted all that grace which he had received when he was illuminated, and to have lost the benefits of his redemption and former expiation. And I conceive this is the full meaning of those words of St. Paul, which are of highest difficulty and latent sense: 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, &c. if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.'² The reason is there subjoined, and more clearly explicated a little after: 'For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins;' for 'he hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace.'³ The meaning is divers, according to the degrees of apostacy or relapse. They who fall away after they were once enlightened in baptism, and felt

¹ See Discourse vi. of Baptism.

² Heb. vi. 4, 6.

³ Heb. x. 26, 29.

all those blessed effects of the sanctification and the emanations of the Spirit, if it be into a contradictory state of sin and mancipation, and obstinate purposes to serve Christ's enemies; then 'there remains nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment:' but if the backsliding be but the interruption of the first sanctity by a single act, or an unconformed, unresolved, unmalicious habit; then also 'it is impossible to renew them unto repentance,' viz. as formerly; that is, they can never be reconciled as before, integrally, fully, and at once, during this life: for that redemption and expiation was by baptism into Christ's death, and there are no more deaths of Christ, nor any more such sacramental consignations of the benefit of it; 'there is no more sacrifice for sins,' but the redemption is one, as the sacrifice is one in whose virtue the redemption does operate. And therefore the Novatians, who were zealous men, denied to the first sort of persons the peace of the church, and remitted them to the Divine judgment. The church herself was sometimes almost as zealous against the second sort of persons lapsed into capital crimes, granting to them repentance but once: but such disciplines consigning this truth, that every recession from the state of grace, in which by baptism we were established and consigned, is a further step from the possibilities of heaven, and so near a ruin, that the church thought them persons fit to be transmitted to a judicature immediately divine; as supposing either her power to be too little, or the other's malice too great, or else the danger too violent, or the scandal insupportable: for concerning such persons, who once were pious, holy, and forgiven,

(for so is every man and woman worthily and aptly baptized,) and afterwards fell into dissolution of manners, 'extinguishing the Holy Ghost, doing despite to the Spirit of grace, crucifying again the Lord of life;' that is, returning to such a condition from which they were once recovered, and could not otherwise be so but by the death of our dearest Lord; I say, concerning such persons the Scripture speaks very suspiciously, and to the sense and signification of an infinite danger: for if the speaking a word against the Holy Ghost be not to be pardoned here nor hereafter, what can we imagine to be the end of such impiety which 'crucifies the Lord of life, and puts him to an open shame,' which 'quenches the Spirit, doing despite to the Spirit of grace?' Certainly that is worse than speaking against him. And such is every person who falls into wilful apostacy from the faith, or does that violence to holiness which the other does to faith; that is, extinguishes the sparks of illumination, quenches the Spirit, and is habitually and obstinately criminal in any kind. For the same thing that atheism was in the first period of the world, and idolatry in the second, the same is apostacy in the last; it is a state wholly contradictory to all our religious relation to God, according to the nature and manner of the present communication. Only this last, because it is more malicious, and a declension from a greater grace, is something like the fall of angels. And of this the emperor Julian was a sad example.

19. But as these are degrees immediately next, and a little less, so the hopes of pardon are the more visible. Simon Magus spake a word, or at

least thought, against the Holy Ghost : he thought he was to be bought for money. Concerning him St. Peter pronounced, ' Thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity : yet repent, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.'¹ Here the matter was of great difficulty ; but yet there was a possibility left, at least no impossibility of recovery declared. And therefore St. Jude bids us, ' of some to have compassion, making a difference ; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire :'² meaning that their condition is only not desperate. And still in descent, retaining the same proportion, every lesser sin is easier pardoned, as better consisting with the state of grace : the whole Spirit is not destroyed, and the body of sin is not introduced ; Christ is not quite ejected out of possession, but like an oppressed prince, still continues his claim ; and such is his mercy that he will still do so, till all be lost, or that he is provoked by too much violence, or that antichrist is put in substitution, and 'sin reigns in our mortal body.' So that I may use the words of St. John, ' These things I write unto you, that you sin not. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is a propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.'³ That is plainly, although the design of the gospel be, that we should erect a throne for Christ to reign in our spirits, and this doctrine of innocence be therefore preached that we sin not ; yet if once be overtaken in a fault, despair not, Christ is our advocate, and he is the propitiation :

¹ Acts, viii. 20, 22, 23.² Verse 22, 23.³ 1 John, i. 1, 2.

he did propitiate the Father by his death, and the benefit of that we receive at our first access to him; but then he is our advocate too, and prays perpetually for our perseverance or restitution respectively. But this purpose is, and he is able so to do, 'to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.'

20. This consideration I intend should relate to all Christians of the world. And although, by the present custom of the church, we are baptized in our infancy, and do not actually reap that fruit of present pardon which persons of a mature age in the primitive church did; (for we yet need it not, as we shall when we have passed the calentures of youth, which was the time which the wisest of our fathers in Christ chose for their baptism, as appears in the instance of St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and divers others;) yet we must remember, that there is baptism of the Spirit as well as of water. And whenever this happens, whether it be together with the baptism of water, as usually it was when only men and women of years of discretion were baptized; or whether it be ministered in the rite of confirmation, which is an admirable suppletory of an early baptism, and intended by the Holy Ghost for a corroborative of baptismal grace, and a defensive against danger; or that, lastly, it be performed by an internal and merely spiritual ministry, when we, by acts of our own election, verify the promise made in baptism, and so bring back the rite, by receiving the effect of baptism; that is, whenever the 'filth of our flesh is washed away,' and that we have 'the answer of a pure conscience towards God,' which St. Peter affirms to be the true baptism; and which, by the purpose and design of God, it is

expected we should not defer longer than a great reason or a great necessity enforces ; when our sins are first expiated, and the sacrifice and death of Christ is made ours, and we made God's by a more immediate title ; (which at some time or other happens to all Christians, that pretend to any hopes of heaven ;) then let us look to our standing, and 'take heed lest we fall.' When we once have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come ; that is, when we are redeemed by an actual mercy and presential application, which every Christian that belongs to God is at some time or other of his life ; then a fall into a deadly crime is highly dangerous, but a relapse into a contrary estate is next to desperate.

21. I represent this sad, but most true doctrine, in the words of St. Peter : ' If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome ; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.'¹ So that a relapse, after a state of grace into a state of sin, into confirmed habits, is to us a great sign, and possibly in itself it is more than a sign, even a state of reprobation and final abscission.

22. The sum of all is this :—There are two states of like opposite terms. First, ' Christ redeems us

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

from our vain conversation,' and reconciles us to God, putting us into an entire condition of pardon, favour, innocence, and acceptance, and becomes our Lord and King, his Spirit dwelling and reigning in us. The opposite state to this, is that which in Scripture is called a 'crucifying the Lord of life,' a 'doing despite to the spirit of grace,' a 'being entangled in the pollutions of the world,' the 'apostacy,' or 'falling away,' an impotency or disability to do good, viz. of such 'who cannot cease from sin,' who are slaves of sin, and of whom 'sin reigns in their bodies.'¹ This condition is a full and integral deletory of the first: it is such a condition, which as it hath no holiness or remanent affections to virtue, so it hath no hope or revelation of a mercy, because all that benefit is lost which they received by the death of Christ, and the first being lost 'there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment.' But between these two states stand all those imperfections and single delinquencies, those slips and falls, those parts of recession and apostacy, those grievings of the Spirit: and so long as any thing of the first state is left, so long we are within the covenant of grace, so long we are within the ordinary limits of mercy and the divine compassion: we are in possibilities of recovery, and the same sacrifice of Christ hath its power over us: Christ is in his possession, though he be disturbed. But then our restitution consists upon the only condition of a renovation of our integrity: as are the degrees of our innocence, so are our degrees of confidence.

23. Now because the intermedial state is divi-

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 14.

sible, various, successive, and alterable ; so also is our condition of pardon. Our flesh shall no more return as that of a little child, our wounds shall never be perfectly cured ; but a scar, and pain, and danger of a relapse shall for ever afflict us. Our sins shall be pardoned by parts and degrees, to uncertain purposes, but with certain danger of being recalled again : and the pardon shall never be consummate till that day in which all things have their consummation.

24. And this is evident to have been God's usual dealing with all those upon whom his name is called. God pardoned David's sins of adultery and murder ; but the pardon was but to a certain degree, and in a limited expression : 'God hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die.'¹ But this pardon was as imperfect as his condition was : 'nevertheless the child that is born unto thee, that shall die.' Thus God pardoned the Israelites at the importunity of Moses, and yet threatened to visit that sin upon them in the day of visitation. And so it is in Christianity : when once we have broke and decomposed the golden chain of vocation, election, and justification, which are entire links and methodical periods of our happiness when we first give up our names to Christ, for ever after our condition is imperfect ; we have broken our covenant, and we must be saved by the excrescences and overflowings of mercy. Our whole endeavour must be to be reduced to the state of our baptismal innocence and integrity, because in that the covenant was established. And since our life is full of failances, and all our endeavours can never make us such as Christ made us, and yet upon that con-

¹ 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.

dition our hopes of happiness were established, I mean, of remaining such as he had made us; as are the degrees of our restitution and access to the first federal condition, so also are the degrees of our pardon: but as it is always in imperfection during this life, and subject to change and defailance; so also are the hopes of our felicity, never certain till we are taken from all danger, never perfect till all that is imperfect in us is done away.

25. And therefore in the present condition of things our pardon was properly expressed by David and St. Paul, by 'a covering,' and 'a not imputing.'¹ For because the body of sin dies divisibly, and fights perpetually, and disputes with hopes of victory, and may also prevail, all this life is a condition of suspense; our sin is rather covered, than properly pardoned; God's wrath is suspended, not satisfied; the sin is not to all purposes of anger imputed, but yet is in some sense remanent, or at least lies ready at the door. Our condition is a state of imperfection; and every degree of imperfection brings a degree of recession from the state Christ puts us in; and every recession from our innocence is also an abatement of our confidence: the anger of God hovers over our head, and breaks out into temporal judgments; and he retracts them again, and threatens worse, according as we approach to, or retire from that first innocence, which was the first entertainment of a Christian, and the crown of the evangelical covenant. Upon that we entertained the mercies of redemption; and God established it upon such an obedience which is a constant, perpetual, and universal sincerity and endeavour. And as we perform our part, so God ve-

¹ Psalm, xxxii. 1, 2; Rom. iv. 7.

rifies his ; and not only gives a great assistance, by the perpetual influences of his Holy Spirit, by which we are consigned to the day of redemption, but also takes an account of obedience, not according to the standard of the law and an exact scrutiny, but by an evangelical proportion, in which we are on one side looked upon as persons already redeemed and assisted, and therefore highly engaged ; and on the other side, as compassed about with infirmities and enemies, and therefore much pitied. So that, as at first, our calling and election is presently good, and shall remain so, if we make it sure : so if we once prevaricate it, we are rendered then full of hazard, difficulty, and uncertainty, and we must with pains and sedulity ‘ work out our salvation with fear and trembling ;’ first by preventing a fall, or afterwards by returning to that excellent condition from whence we have departed.

26. But although the pardon of sins after baptism be, during this life, difficult, imperfect, and revokable ; yet because it is to great effects for the present, and in order to a complete pardon in the day of judgment, we are next to enquire, what are the parts of duty to which we are obliged after such prevarications, which usually interrupt the state of baptismal innocence and the life of the Spirit. St. John gives this account : ‘ If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have communion one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin.’¹ This state of duty St. Paul calls ‘ a casting off the works of darkness, a putting on the ar-

¹ 1 John, i. 6,

mour of light, a walking honestly, a putting on the Lord Jesus Christ.¹ And to it he confronts, 'making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' St. Peter, describing the duty of a Christian, relates the proportion of it as high as the first precedent, even God himself: 'As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts.'² And again, 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?'³ And St. John, with the same severity and perfection: 'Every one that hath this hope (that is, every one who either does not, or hath no reason to despair,) purifieth himself, even as God is pure;'⁴ meaning, that he is pure by a divine purity, which God hath prescribed as an imitation of his holiness, according to our capacities and probabilities. That purity must needs be a 'laying aside all malice and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings;'⁵ so St. Peter expresses it: a 'laying aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us;'⁶ so St. Paul: this is to 'walk in the light, as he is in the light, for in him is no darkness at all:'⁷ which we have then imitated, when we have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts; that is, so as we are not held by them, that we take them for our enemies, for the object and party of our contestation and spiritual fight; when we contend earnestly against them, and resist them unto blood, if need be; that is being pure as he is pure. But

¹ Rom. xiii. 11, 13, 14.

² 2 Pet. iii. 11.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 1.

⁶ Heb. xii 1.

² 1 Pet. i. 14, 15.

⁴ 1 John, iii. 3.

⁷ 1 John, i. 7, 8; 2 Pet. i. 4.

besides this positive rejection of all evil, and perpetually contesting against sin, we must pursue the interests of virtue and an active religion.

27. And 'besides this,' saith St. Peter, 'giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.'¹ All this is an evident prosecution of the first design; the holiness and righteousness of a whole life, the being clear from all spots and blemishes, a being pure, and so presented unto Christ: for upon this the covenant being founded, to this all industries must endeavour, and arrive in their proportions. 'For if these things be in you and abound, they shall make that you be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins;'² that is, he hath lost his baptismal grace, and is put from the first state of his redemption towards that state which is contradictory and destructive of it.

28. Now because all these things are in latitude, distance, and divisibility, and only enjoin a sedulity and great endeavour, all that we can dwell upon is this, that he who endeavours most is most secure,

¹ 2 Pet. i. 5—7. *Veri boni aviditas tuta est. Quid sit istud, interrogas? aut unde subeat? dicam: ex bona conscientia, ex honestis consiliis, ex rectis actionibus, ex contemptu fortuitorum, ex placido vitæ et continuo tenore unam prementis viam.* Sen. ep. 23.—"There is safety in the desire of true good. Do you ask whence it comes? I will tell you: from a good conscience; from right principles, from good actions, from a contempt for fortune, and from a tranquil and even tenour of life."

² 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.

and every degree of negligence is a degree of danger; and although, in the intermedial condition between the two states of Christianity and a full impiety, there is a state of recovery and possibility, yet there is danger in every part of it, and it increases according as the deflexion and irregularity comes to its height, position, state, and finality. So that we must give all diligence to work out our salvation, and it would ever be with fear and trembling: with fear that we do not lose our innocence; and with trembling, if we have lost it, for fear we never recover, or never be accepted. But holiness of life and uninterrupted sanctity being the condition of our salvation, the ingredient of the covenant, we must proportion our degrees of hope and confidence of heaven according as we have obtained degrees of innocence, or perseverance, or restitution. Only this: as it is certain he is in a state of reprobation who lives unto sin; that is, whose actions are habitually criminal, who gives more of his consent to wickedness than to virtue; so it is also certain he is not in the state of God's favour and sanctification, unless he lives unto righteousness; that is, unless his desires, and purposes, and endeavours, and actions, and customs are spiritual, holy, sanctified, and obedient. When sin is dead, and the Spirit is life; when the lusts of the flesh are mortified, and the heart is purged from an evil conscience, and we abound in a whole system of Christian virtues; when our hearts are right to God, and with our affections and our wills we love God and keep his commandments; when we do not only cry, Lord, Lord, but also do his will, then Christ dwells in us, and we in Christ. Now let all this be taken in the lowest sense that

can be imagined ; all, I say, which out of Scripture I have transcribed ;—‘ casting away every weight, laying aside all malice, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, crucifying the old man with all his affections and lusts ;’ and then, ‘ having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,’ besides this, ‘ adding virtue to virtue,’ till ‘ all righteousness be fulfilled in us, walking in the light, putting on the Lord Jesus, purifying ourselves as God is pure, following peace with all men, and holiness, resisting unto blood, living in the Spirit, being holy in all manner of conversation as he is holy, being careful and excellent in all conversation and godliness ;’—all this, being a pursuit of the first design of Christ’s death and our reconciliation, can mean no less but that, 1, We should have in us no affection to a sin ; of which we can best judge when we never choose it, and never fall under it but by surprise, and never lie under it at all, but instantly recover, judging ourselves severely : and, 2, That we should choose virtue with great freedom of spirit and alacrity, and pursue it earnestly, integrally, and make it the business of our lives : and, 3, That the effect of this be, that sin be crucified in us, and the desires to it dead, flat, and useless ; and that our desires of serving Christ be quick-spirited, active, and effective, inquisitive for opportunities, apprehensive of the offer, cheerful in the action, and persevering in the employment.

29. Now let a prudent person imagine what infirmities and oversights can consist with a state thus described, and all that does no violence to the covenant : God pities us, and calls us not to an account for what morally cannot, or certainly will not with great industry be prevented. But whatsoever

is inconsistent with this condition, is an abatement from our hopes, as it is a retiring from our duty; and is with greater or less difficulty cured, as are the degrees of its distance from that condition which Christ stipulated with us when we became his disciples: for we are just so restored to our state of grace and favour, as we are restored to our state of purity and holiness. Now this redintegration, or renewing of us into the first condition, is also called repentance, and is permitted to all persons who still remain within the powers and possibilities of the covenant; that is, who are not in a state contradictory to the state and portion of grace; but with a difficulty increased by all circumstances and incidences of the crime and person. And this I shall best represent in repeating these considerations: 1. Some sins are past hopes of pardon in this life. 2. All that are pardoned are pardoned by parts, revocably and imperfectly during this life, not quickly nor yet manifestly. 3. Repentance contains in it many operations, parts, and employments; its terms and purpose being to redintegrate our lost condition; that is, in a second and less perfect sense; but as much as in such circumstances we can, to verify our first obligations of innocence and holiness in all manner of conversation and godliness.

30. Concerning the first, it is too sad a consideration to be too dogmatical and conclusive in it; and therefore I shall only recal those expresses of Scripture which may, without envy, decree the article: such as those of St. Paul, that there is a certain sort of men, whom he twice describes, whom 'it is impossible to renew again unto repentance;' or those of St. Peter, such whose 'latter end is

worse than the beginning, because after they once had escaped the pollutions of the world, they are entangled therein ;' such who, as our blessed Saviour threatens, ' shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come : ' for there is an unpardonable estate, by reason of its malice and opposition to the covenant of grace ; and there is a state unpardonable, because the time of repentance is past. There are days and periods of grace : ' If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day,' said the weeping Saviour of the world, to fore-known and determined Jerusalem. When God's decrees are gone out, they are not always revocable ; and therefore it was a great caution of the apostle, that we should ' follow peace and holiness,' and ' look diligently that we fall not from the grace of God ;' lest any of us become like Esau, to whose repentance there was no place left, ' though he sought it carefully with tears : ' ¹ meaning, that we also may put ourselves into a condition when it shall be impossible we should be renewed unto repentance. And those are they who ' sin a sin unto death,' ² for whom we have from the apostle no encouragement to pray. And these are in so general and conclusive terms described in Scripture, that every persevering sinner hath great reason to suspect himself to be in the number. If he endeavours, as soon as he thinks of it, to recover, it is the best sign he was not arrived so far : but he that liveth long in a violent and habitual course of sin, is at the margin and brim of that state of final reprobation ; and some men are in it before they be aware ; and to some God reckons their days swifter, and their periods shorter.

¹ Heb. xii. 14, 15, 16, 17.

² 1 John, v. 16

The use I make of this consideration is, that if any man hath reason to suspect, or to be certain, that his time of repentance is past, it is most likely to be a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, a life contrary to the mercies and grace of the evangelical covenant: for he hath provoked God as long as he could, and rejected the offers of grace as long as he lived, and refused virtue till he could not entertain her, and hath done all those things which a person rejected from hopes of repentance can easily be imagined to have done. And if there be any time of rejection, although it may be earlier, yet it is also certainly the last.

31. Concerning the second, I shall add this to the former discourse of it, that perfect pardon of sins is not in this world at all, after the first emission and great efflux of it in our first regeneration. During this life we are in imperfection, minority, and under conditions which we have prevaricated, and our recovery is in perpetual flux, in heightenings and declensions; and we are highly uncertain of our acceptation, because we are not certain of our restitution and innocence; we know not whether we have done all that is sufficient to repair the breach made in the first state of favour and baptismal grace. But 'he that is dead,' saith St. Paul, 'is justified from sin;'¹ not till then. And therefore, in the doctrine of the most learned Jews it is affirmed: "He that is guilty of the profanation of the name of God, he shall not interrupt the apparent malignity of it by his present repentance, nor make atonement in the day of expiation, nor wash the stains away by chastising of himself; but during

¹ Rom. vi. 7.

life it remains wholly in suspense, and before death is not extinguished; according to the saying of the prophet Isaiah: 'This iniquity shall not be blotted out till ye die, saith the Lord of Hosts.'¹ And some wise persons have affirmed, that Jacob alluded to this in his expression and appellatives of God, whom he called 'the God of Abraham, and the fear of his father Isaac:'² because (as the doctors of the Jews tell us) Abraham being dead, was ascribed into the final condition of God's family; but Isaac, being living, had apprehensions of God not only of a pious, but also of a tremulous sort: he was not sure of his own condition, much less of the degrees of his reconciliation, how far God had forgiven his sins, and how far he had repented them. And it is certain, that if every degree of the divine favour be not assured by a holy life, those sins of whose pardon we were most hopeful, turn in as full vigour and clamorous importunity against us ever, and are made more vocal by the appendant gratitude, and other accidental degrees. And as Christ taught us by a parable: for as the Lord made his uncharitable servant pay all that debt which he had formerly forgiven him, even 'so will God do to us, if we from our hearts forget one another their trespasses.'³ 'Behold the goodness and severity of God,'⁴ saith St. Paul, in them which fell severely; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in that goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off: for this is my covenant, which I shall make with them, when I shall take away their sins.'⁵ And if this be true in those sins

¹ Isaiah, xxii. 14.² Gen. xxxi. 42.³ Matth. xviii. 35.⁴ Rom. xi. 22.⁵ Ibid. verse 27.

which God certainly hath forgotten, such as were all those which were committed before our illumination, much rather is it true in those which we committed after, concerning whose actual and full pardon we cannot be certain without a revelation. So that our pardon of sins, when it is granted after the breach of our covenant, is just so secure as our perseverance is : concerning which, because we must ascertain it as well as we can, but ever with fear and trembling, so also is the estate of our pardon, hazardous, conditional, revocable, and uncertain. And therefore, the best of men do all their lives ask pardon even of those sins for which they have wept bitterly, and done the sharpest and severest penance. And if it be necessary, we pray that we may not enter into temptation, because temptation is full of danger, and the danger may bring a sin, and the sin may ruin us ; it is also necessary that we understand the condition of our pardon to be, as is the condition of our person, variable as will, sudden as affections, alterable as our purposes, revocable as our own good intentions, and then made as ineffective as our inclinations to good actions. And there is no way to secure our confidence and our hope but by being perfect, and holy, and pure, as our heavenly Father is ; that is, in the sense of human capacity, free from the habits of all sin, and active and industrious, and continuing in the ways of godliness : for upon this only the promise is built, and by our proportion to this state we must proportion our confidence ; we have no other revelation. Christ reconciled us to his Father upon no other conditions, and made the covenant upon no other articles but of a holy life, in obedience universal and perpetual : and the abate-

ments of the rigorous sense of the words, as they are such as may infinitely testify and prove his mercy, so they are such as must secure our duty and habitual graces ; an industry, manly, constant, and Christian. And because these have so great latitude, (and to what degrees God will accept our returns he hath nowhere punctually described,) he that is most severe in his determination does best secure himself, and by exacting the strictest account of himself, shall obtain the easier scrutiny at the hands of God. The use I make of this consideration is to the same purpose with the former. For if every day of sin, and every criminal act is a degree of recess from the possibilities of heaven, it would be considered at how great distance a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, may apprehend himself to stand for mercy and pardon : and since the terms of restitution must, in labour and in extension of time, or intension of degrees, be of value great enough to restore him to some proportion or equivalence with that state of grace from whence he is fallen, and upon which the covenant was made with him ; how impossible, or how near to impossible, it will appear to him to go so far, and do so much in that state, and in those circumstances of disability!

32. Concerning the third particular, I consider that repentance, as it is described in Scripture, is a system of holy duties, not of one kind, not properly consisting of parts, as if it were a single grace ; but it is the reparation of that estate into which Christ first put us ; ‘ a renewing us, in the spirit of our mind,’ so the apostle calls it : and the Holy Ghost hath taught this truth to us by the implication of many appellatives, and also by express

discourses : for there is in Scripture, 'a repentance to be repented of,'¹ and 'a repentance never to be repented of.' The first is mere sorrow for what is past, an ineffective trouble producing nothing good : such as was the repentance of Judas ; he repented, and hanged himself ; and such was that of Esau, when it was too late ; and so was the repentance of the five foolish virgins : which examples tell us also when ours is an impertinent and ineffectual repentance. To this repentance pardon is nowhere promised in Scripture. But there is a repentance which is called conversion, or amendment of life ; a repentance productive of holy fruits, such as the Baptist and our blessed Saviour preached, such as himself also propounded in the example of the Ninevites ; they 'repented at the preaching of Jonah ;'² that is, 'they fasted, they covered them in sackcloth, they cried mightily unto God ; yea, they turned every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands.' And this was it that appeased God in that instance. 'God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way ; and God repented of the evil, and did it not.'⁴

33. The same character of repentance we find in the prophet Ezekiel : 'When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right ;'⁵ 'If the wicked restore the pledge, give

¹ Μεταμέλεια.

² Μεάνοια. Μεταμεληθείς ἐπέστρεψε, cui in Act. Apost. opponitur μετανοήσατε ὃν ἐπιστρέψατε, Act. iii. 19. Huic enim promittitur peccatorum remissio in seq. εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας.

³ Mat. xii. 4.

⁴ Jonah, iii. 7, 8, 10.

⁵ Ezek. xviii. 27.

again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live, he shall not die.'¹ And in the gospel repentance is described with as full and entire comprehensions as in the old prophets: for faith and repentance are the whole duty of the gospel. Faith, when it is in conjunction with a practical grace, signifies an intellectual. Faith signifies the submission of the understanding to the institution; and repentance includes all that whole practice which is the entire duty of a Christian, after he hath been overtaken in a fault. And therefore repentance first includes a renunciation and abolition of all evil, and then also enjoins a pursuit of every virtue; and that till they arrive at an habitual confirmation.²

34. Of the first sense are all those expressions of Scripture which imply repentance to be the delectory of sins. 'Repentance from dead works,'³ St. Paul affirms to be the prime fundamental of religion; that is, conversion or returning from dead works: for, unless repentance be so construed, it is not good sense. And this is therefore highly verified, because repentance is intended to set us into the condition of our first undertaking, and articles covenanted with God. And therefore it is 'a redemption of the time;' that is, a recovering what we lost, and making it up by our doubled industry. 'Remember whence thou art fallen, repent;'⁴ that is, return, 'and do thy first works,' said the Spirit

¹ Ezek. xxxiii. 15.

² Vide Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. ii. ubi ad eundem sensum definit penitentiam.

³ Μεράνοια ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν ἔργων. Heb. vi. 1.

⁴ Apocal. ii. 5.

to the angel of the church of Ephesus; or else 'I will remove thy candlestick, except thou repent.' It is a restitution: 'If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one;'¹ that is, put him where he was. And then, that repentance also implies a doing all good, is certain by the sermon of the Baptist: 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.'² 'Do thy first works,' was the sermon of the Spirit. 'Laying aside every weight, and the sin that easily encircles us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us;' so St. Paul taught. And St. Peter gives charge, that when we 'have escaped the corruptions of the world and of lust ;'³ besides this, we give all diligence to acquire the rosary and conjugation of Christian virtues: and they are proper effects, or rather constituent parts, of a holy repentance: 'for godly sorrow worketh repentance,' saith St. Paul, 'not to be repented of:'⁴ and that ye may know what is signified by repentance, behold, the product was carefulness, clearing themselves, indignation, fear, vehement desires, zeal, and revenge; to which, if we add the epithet of holy, (for these were the results of a godly sorrow, and the members of a repentance not to be repented of,) we are taught that repentance, besides the purging out the malice of iniquity, is also a sanctification of the whole man, a turning nature into grace, passions into reason, and the flesh into spirit.

35. To this purpose I reckon those phrases of Scripture, calling it a 'renewing of our minds ;'⁵ a 'renewing of the Holy Ghost ;'⁶ a 'cleansing of

¹ Gal. vi. 1.² Matth. iii. 8.³ 2 Pet. i. 4, 5.⁴ 2 Cor. vii. 10.⁵ Rom. xii. 2.⁶ Tit. iii. 5.

our hands and purifying our hearts;¹ that is, a becoming holy in our affections, and righteous in our actions; a transformation or utter change; 'a crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts';² a 'mortified state';³ a 'purging out the old leaven, and becoming a new conspersion';⁴ a 'waking out of sleep,'⁵ and 'walking honestly as in the day';⁶ a 'being born again,'⁷ and 'being born from above'; a 'new life.' And I consider that these preparative actions of repentance, such as are sorrow, and confession of sins, and fasting, and exterior mortifications and severities, are but forerunners of repentance, some of the retinue, and they are of the family; but they no more complete the duty of repentance than the harbingers are the whole court, or than the fingers are all the body. There 'is more joy in heaven,' said our blessed Saviour, 'over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.' There is no man but needs a tear and a sorrow even for his daily weaknesses, and possibly they are the instrumental expiations of our sudden, and frequent, and lesser surprises of imperfection: but the 'just persons need no repentance; that is, need no inversion of state, no transformation from condition to condition, but from the less to the more perfect the best man hath. And therefore those are vain persons who, when they owe God a hundred, will write four-score; or a thousand, will write fifty. It was the saying of an excellent person, that "Repentance is the beginning of philosophy, a flight and renounci-

¹ James, iv. 8. ² Gal. v. 24. ³ Col. iii. 5. ⁴ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁵ Eph. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 11.

⁶ Rom. xiii. 13.

⁷ John, iii. 3.

ation of evil works and words, and the first preparation and entrance into a life which is never to be repented of. And therefore a penitent is not taken with umbrages and appearances, nor quits a real good for an imaginary, nor chooses evil for fear of enemies and adverse accidents; but peremptorily conforms his sentence to the divine laws, and submits his whole life in a conformity with them."¹ He that said those excellent words, had not been taught the Christian institution; but it was admirable reason and deep philosophy, and most consonant to the reasonableness of virtue, and the proportions and designs of repentance, and no other than the doctrine of Christian philosophy.

36. And it is considerable, since in Scripture there is a repentance mentioned which is impertinent and ineffectual as to the obtaining pardon, a repentance implied which is to be repented of, and another expressed which is 'never to be repented of,' and this is described to be new state of life, a whole conversion and transformation of the man; it follows, that whatsoever in any sense can be called repentance, and yet is less than this new life, must be that ineffective repentance. A sorrow is a repentance, and all the acts of dolorous expression are but the same sorrow in other characters; and they are good when they are parts or instruments of the true repentance: but when they are the whole repentance, that repentance is no better than

¹ Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, ἐκ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυγῇ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἢ πρώτης παρασκευῆς. Hierocl. in Pythag.—"This repentance is the beginning of philosophy, the avoiding of evil words and works, and the first preparation of a life not to be repented of."

that of Judas, nor more prosperous than that of Esau. Every sorrow is not a godly sorrow; and that which is, is but instrumental and in order to repentance: 'Godly sorrow worketh repentance,' saith St. Paul; that is, it does its share towards it, as every grace does towards the pardon, as every degree of pardon does toward heaven. By 'godly sorrow' it is probable St. Paul means the same thing which the school hath since called contrition; a grief proceeding from a holy principle, from our love of God, and anger that we have offended him: and yet this is a great way off from that repentance, without the performance of which we shall certainly perish. But no contrition alone is remissive of sins, but as it co-operates towards the integrity of our duty. *Cum conversus ingemuerit*, in the prophet's expression; when a man 'mourns and turns from all his evil way,' that is a godly sorrow, and that is repentance too. But the tears of a dolorous person, though running over with great effusions, and shed in great bitterness, and expressed in actions of punitive justice, all being but the same sense in louder language, being nothing but the expressions of sorrow, are good only as they tend further; and if they do, they may by degrees bring us to repentance, and that repentance will bring us to heaven: but of themselves they may as well make the sea swell beyond its margin, or water and refresh the sun-burnt earth, as move God to mercy and pierce the heavens. But then to this consideration we may

¹ Μετανοήσατε ἡ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts, iii. 19. οἱ γὰρ ἔχοντες διήν τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς πεποιημένοις, παύονται τῆς ὀργῆς, Arist. ii. Rhetor. ——— Ἀγαθοὶ ἀριδάκρυες ἄνδρες, Hom. Ὁ μετανοῶν ἡ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τῷ κακῷ πράξιν εἰρήσεται. Hierocl.

add, that a sorrow upon a death-bed, after a vicious life, is such as cannot easily be understood to be ordinarily so much as the beginning of virtue, or the first instance towards a holy life. For he that till then retained his sins, and now, when he is certain and believes he shall die, or is fearful lest he should, is sorrowful that he hath sinned, is only sorrowful because he is like to perish : and such a sorrow may perfectly consist with as great an affection to sin as ever the man had in the highest carresses and invitation of his lust. For even then, in certain circumstances, he would have refused to have acted his greatest temptation. The boldest and most pungent lust would refuse to be satisfied in the market-place, or with a dagger at his heart ; and the greatest intemperance would refuse a pleasant meal, if he believed the meat to be mixed with poison : and yet this restraint of appetite is no abatement of the affection, any more than the violent fears which, by being incumbent upon the death-bed penitent, make him grieve for the evil consequents more than to hate the malice and irregularity. He that does not grieve till his greatest fear presses him hard, and damnation treads upon his heels, feels indeed the effects of fear, but can have no present benefit of his sorrow ; because it had no natural principle, but a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause, inconsistent with a free, placid, and moral election. But this I speak only by way of caution ; for God's mercy is infinite, and can, if he please, make it otherwise. But it is not good to venture, unless you have a promise.

37. The same also I consider concerning the purpose of a new life ; which that any man should judge to be repentance, that duty which restores

us, is more unreasonable than to think sorrow will do it. For as man may sorrow, and yet never be restored; (and he may sorrow so much the more, because he shall never be restored, as Esau did, as the five foolish virgins did, and as many more do;) so he that purposes to lead a new life, hath convinced himself that the duty is undone, and therefore his pardon not granted, nor his condition restored. As a letter is not a word, nor a word an action; as an embryo is not a man, nor the seed the fruit; so is a purpose of obedience but the element of repentance, the first imaginations of it differing from the grace itself, as a disposition from a habit, or (because itself will best express itself) as the purpose does from the act. For either a holy life is necessary, or it is not necessary. If it be not, why does any man hope to 'escape the wrath to come,' by resolving to do an unnecessary thing? or if he does not purpose it, when he pretends he does, that is a mocking of God, and that is a great way from being an instrument of his restitution. But if a holy life be necessary, as it is certain by infinite testimonies of Scriptures, it is the *unum necessarium*, the one great necessary; it cannot reasonably be thought that any thing less than doing it shall serve our turns. That which is only in purpose is not yet done; and yet it is necessary it should be done, because it is necessary we should purpose it. And in this we are sufficiently concluded by that ingeminate expression used by St. Paul: 'In Jesus Christ nothing can avail but a new creature;' 'nothing but 'faith working by charity;' nothing but 'a keeping the commandments of God.' 'And as

¹ Gal. vi. 15, and v. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 19.

many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; they are the Israel of God.'¹

38. This consideration I intended to oppose against the carnal security of death-bed penitents who have (it is to be feared) spent a vicious life who have therefore mocked themselves, because they meant to mock God; they would reap what they sowed not. But 'be not deceived,' saith the apostle; 'he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.' Only this, 'Let us not be weary of well-doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'² Meaning that by a persevering industry, and a long work, and a succession of religious times, we must sow to the Spirit: a work of such length, that the greatest danger is of fainting and intercision; but he that sows to the Spirit, not being weary of well-doing, not fainting in the long process, he, and he only, shall reap life everlasting. But a purpose is none of all this. If it comes to act, and be productive of a holy life, then it is useful; and it was like the eve of a holiday, festival in the midst of its abstinence and vigils—it was the beginnings of repentance: but if it never come to act, it was to no purpose, a mocking of God, an act of direct hypocrisy, a provocation of God and a deceiving our own selves. You are unhappy you began not early, or that your earlier days return not together with your good purposes.

39. And neither can this have any other sentence, though the purpose be made upon our death-bed. For God hath made no covenant with us on

¹ Gal. vi. 16. ² Ibid. verse 7, 8. ³ Ibid. verse 9.

our death-bed distinct from that he made with us in our life and health. And since in our life and present abilities, good purposes, and resolutions, and vows (for they are but the same thing in differing degrees) did signify nothing till they came to act, and no man was reconciled to God by good intentions, but by doing the will of God; can we imagine that such purposes can more prevail at the end of a wicked life than at the beginning? that less piety will serve our turns after fifty or sixty years of impiety, than after but five or ten? that a wicked and sinful life should by less pains be expiated than an unhappy year? For it is not in the state of grace, as in other exterior actions of religion or charity, where God will accept the will for the deed, when the external act is inculpably out of our powers, and may also be supplied by the internal: as bendings of the body, by the prostration of the soul; alms, by charity; preaching, by praying for conversion. These things are necessary, because they are precepts, and obligatory only in certain circumstances, which may fail, and we be innocent and disobliged. But it is otherwise in the essential parts of our duty, which God hath made the immediate and next condition of our salvation; such which are never out of our power but by our own fault. Such are charity, forgiveness, repentance, and faith; such to which we are assisted by God, such which are always put by God's grace into our power, therefore because God indispensably demands them. In these cases, as there is no revelation, God will accept the will for the deed, the purpose for the act, so it is unreasonable to expect it; because God did once put it into our powers: and if we put it out, we must not

complain of want of fire which ourselves have quenched, nor complain we cannot see when we have put our own lights out ; and hope God will accept the will for the deed, since we had no will to it when God put it into our powers. These are but fig-leaves to cover our nakedness, which our sin hath introduced.

40. For either the reducing such vows and purposes to act is the duty, without which the purpose is ineffectual ; or else that practice is but the sign and testimony of a sincere intention, and that very sincere intention was of itself accepted by God in the first spring. If it was nothing but a sign, then the covenant which God made with man in Jesus Christ was faith and good meaning, not faith and repentance ; and a man is justified as soon as ever he purposes well, before any endeavours are commenced, or any act produced, or habit ratified ; and the duties of a holy life are but shadows and significations of a grace, no part of the covenant, not so much as smoke is of fire, but a mere sign of a person justified as soon as he made his vow. But then also a man may be justified five hundred times in a year, as often as he makes a new vow and confident resolution ; which is then done most heartily, when the lust is newly satisfied, and the pleasure disappears for the instant, though the purpose disbands upon the next temptation. Yea, but unless it be a sincere purpose, it will do no good ; and although we cannot discern it, nor the man himself, yet God knows the heart ; and if he sees it would have been reduced to act, then he accepts it. And this is the hopes of a dying man ; but faint they are and dying, as the man himself.

41. For it is impossible for us to know but that

what a man intends (as himself thinks) heartily, is sincerely meant ; and if that may be insincere, and is to be judged only by a never-following event, (in case the man dies,) it cannot become to any man the ground of hope : nay, even to those persons who do mean sincerely, it is still an instrument of distrust and fears infinite, since his own sincere meaning hath nothing in the nature of the thing, no distinct formality, no principle, no sign to distinguish it from the insincere vows of sorrowful, but not truly penitent persons. 2. A purpose acted and not acted differ not in the principle, but in the effect, which is extrinsical and accidental to the purpose, and each might be without the other : a man might live holily, though he had not made that vow, and when he hath made the vow, he may fail of living holily. And as we should think it hard measure to have a damnation increased upon us for those sins which we would have committed if we had lived ; so it cannot be reasonable to build our hopes of heaven upon an imaginary piety, which we never did, and, if we had lived, God knows whether we would or not. 3. God takes away the godly, lest malice should corrupt their understandings ; and ‘ for the elect’s sake those days are shortened, which if they should continue, no flesh should escape.’ But now shall all that be laid upon their score which, if God had not so prevented by their death, God knows they would have done ? And God deals with the wicked in a proportionable manner, to the contrary purpose ; he shortens their days, and takes away their possibilities and opportunities, when the time of repentance is past, because he will not do violence to their wills ; and this ‘ lest they

should return, and be converted, and I should heal them.'¹ So that it is evident, some persons are, by some acts of God, after a vicious life and the frequent rejection of the divine grace, at last prevented from mercy, who, without such courses, and in contrary circumstances, might possibly do acts of repentance, and return, and then God would heal them. 4. Let their purposes and vows be never so sincere in the principle, yet since a man who is in the state of grace, may again fail of it, and forget he was purged from his old sins, (and every dying sinner did so, if ever he was washed in the laver of regeneration and sanctified in his Spirit,) then much more may such a sincere purpose fail: and then it would be known to what distance of time or state from his purpose God will give his final sentence. Whether will he quit him, because in the first stage he will correspond with his intention, and act his purposes, or condemn him, because in his second stage he would prevaricate? And when a man does fail, it is not because his first principle was not good; for the Holy Spirit, which is certainly the best principle of spiritual actions, may be extinguished in a man, and a sincere or hearty purpose may be lost, or it may again be recovered, and be lost again. So that it is as unreasonable as it is unrevealed, that a sincere purpose on a death-bed shall obtain pardon, or pass for a new state of life. Few men are at those instants and in such pressures hypocritical and vain: and yet to perform such purposes is a new work and a new labour; it comes in upon a new stock differing from that principle,

¹ Matt. xiii. 15; ex Is. vi. 9, 10; Mark, iv. 12; Luke, viii. 10; John, xii. 40; Acts, xxviii. 27; Rom. xi. 8.

and will meet with temptations, difficulties, and impediments ; and an honest heart is not sure to remain so, but may split upon a rock of a violent invitation. A promise is made to be faithful *ex post facto* by the event ; but it was sincere or insincere in the principle, only if the person promising did or did not respectively at that time mean what he said. A sincere promise many times is not truly performed.

42. Concerning all the other acts which it is to be supposed a dying person can do, I have only this consideration : If they can make up a new creature, become a new state, be in any sense a holy life, a keeping the commandments of God, a following of peace and holiness, a becoming holy in all conversation ; if they can arrive to the lowest sense of that excellent condition Christ intended to all his disciples, when he made keeping the commandments to be the condition of entering into life, and not crying, Lord, Lord, but doing the will of God ; if he that hath served the lusts of the flesh, and taken pay under all God's enemies during a long and malicious life, can, for any thing a dying person can do, be said in any sense to have lived holily, then his hopes are fairly built. If not, they rely upon a sand, and the storm of death and the divine displeasure will beat too violently upon them. There are no suppletories of the evangelical covenant. If we walk according to the rule, then shall peace and righteousness kiss each other : if we have sinned and prevaricated the rule, repentance must bring us into the ways of righteousness, and then we must go on upon the old stock : but the deeds of the flesh must be mortified, and Christ must dwell in us, and the Spirit must reign in us, and virtue must be habitual, and the

habits must be confirmed. And this as we do by the Spirit of Christ, so it is hallowed and accepted by the grace of God, and we put into a condition of favour, and redeemed from sin, and reconciled to God. But this will not be put off with single acts, nor divided parts, nor newly commenced purposes, nor fruitless sorrow. It is a great folly to venture eternity upon dreams. So that now let me represent the condition of a dying person after a vicious life.

43. First, He that considers the frailty of human bodies, their incidences and aptness to sickness, casualties, death sudden or expected, the condition of several diseases, that some are of too quick a sense and are intolerable, some are dull, stupid, and lethargical; then adds the prodigious judgments which fall upon many sinners in the act of sin, and are marks of our dangers and God's essential justice and severity; and that security which possesses such persons whose lives are vicious, and that habitual carelessness and groundless confidence, or an absolute inconsideration, which is generally the condition and constitution of such minds, every one whereof is likely enough to confound a persevering sinner in miseries eternal, will soon apprehend the danger of a delayed repentance to be infinite and unmeasurable.

44. Secondly, But suppose such a person, having escaped the antecedent circumstances of the danger, is set fairly upon his death-bed, with the just apprehension of his sins about him and his addresses to repentance; consider then the strength of his lusts, that the sins he is to mortify are inveterate, habitual, and confirmed, having had the growth and stability of a whole life; that the liberty of his will is impaired; (the Scripture

saying of such persons, ' whose eyes are full of lust, and that cannot cease from sin; and that his servants they are whom they obey;'¹ that they are slaves to sin, and so not *sui juris*, not at their own dispose;) that his understanding is blinded, his appetite is mutinous, and of a long time used to rebel and prevail; that all the inferior faculties are in disorder; that he wants the helps of grace proportionable to his necessities; (for the longer he hath continued in sin, the weaker the grace of God is in him; so that in effect, at that time, the more need he hath, the less he shall receive, it being God's rule to ' give to him that hath, and from him that hath not, to take even what he hath;') then add the innumerable parts and great burdens of repentance, that it is not a sorrow, nor a purpose, because both these suppose that to be undone which is the only necessary support of all our hopes in Christ when it is done; the innumerable difficult cases of conscience that may occur, particularly in the point of restitution; (which, among many other necessary parts of repentance, is indispensably required of all persons that are able, and in every degree in which they are able;) the many temptations of the devil, the strength of passions, the impotency of the flesh, the illusions of the spirits of darkness,² the tremblings of the heart, the incogitancy of the mind, the implication and entanglings of ten thousand thoughts, and the impertinencies

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 14.

² Ἐπειδὴν τις ἐγγὺς ᾗ τῷ οἶεσθαι τελευτήσῃν, εἰσέρχεται αὐτῷ φόβος καὶ φροντίς περὶ ὧν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν ἐκ εἰσῆς. Plato de Repub.—“ When a man believes himself near death, he begins to fear, and to think of things concerning which he had before no care.”

of a disturbed fancy, and the great hinderances of a sick body and a sad and weary spirit; all these represent a death-bed to be but an ill station for a penitent. If the person be suddenly snatched away, he is not left so much as to dispute: if he be permitted to languish in his sickness, he is either stupid, and apprehends nothing, or else miserable, and hath reason to apprehend too much. However, all these difficulties are to be passed and overcome before the man be put into a savable condition. From this consideration (though perhaps it may infer more, yet) we cannot but conclude this difficulty to be as great as the former danger; that is, vast and ponderous, and insupportable.

45. Thirdly, Suppose the clinic or death-bed penitent to be as forward in these employments, and as successful in the mastering many of the objections as reasonably can be thought; yet it is considerable, that there is a repentance which is to be repented of, and that is a repentance which is not productive of fruits of amendment of life; that there is a period set down by God in his judgment; and that many, who have been profane as Esau was, are reduced into the condition of Esau, and there is no place left for their repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears; that they who have long refused to hear God calling them to repentance, God will refuse to hear them calling for grace and mercy;¹ that he will laugh at some men when their calamity comes; that the five foolish virgins addressed themselves at the noise of the

¹ Mart. l. i. ep. xvi. Vide S. Ambros. lib. ii. de Pœnit. c. i. et xi. S. Aug. in l. Homil. hom. xli. S. Basil. orat. iv. S. Bernard. in parvis Serm. ser. xxxviii.

ridegroom's coming, and begged oil, and went out to buy oil, and yet for want of some more time and an early diligence, came too late, and were shut out for ever; that it is nowhere revealed that such idle endeavours and imperfect practices shall be accepted; that God hath made but one covenant with us in Jesus Christ, which is faith and repentance consigned in baptism; and the signification of them and the purpose of Christ is, 'that we should henceforth no more serve sin,' but mortify and kill him perpetually, and destroy his kingdom, and extinguish, as much as in us lies, his very title; that we should 'live holily, justly, and soberly in this present world, in all holy conversation and godliness;' and that either we must be continued in, or reduced to this state of holy living and habitual sanctity, or we have no title to the promises; that every degree of recession from the state Christ first put us in, is a recession from our hopes, and an insecurity of our condition, and we add to our confidence only as our obedience is restored. All this is but a sad story to a dying person, who sold himself to work wickedness in an habitual iniquity, and aversion from the conditions of the holy covenant in which he was sanctified.

46. And certainly it is unreasonable to plant all our hopes of heaven upon a doctrine that is destructive of all piety; which supposes us in such a condition that God hath been offended at us all our life long, and yet that we can never return our duties to him, unless he will unravel the purposes of his predestination, or call back time again and begin a new computation of years for us; and if he did, it would be still as uncertain. For what

hope is there to that man who hath fulfilled all iniquity, and hath not fulfilled righteousness? Can a man live to the devil, and die to God? 'sow to the flesh and reap to the Spirit?' hope God will in mercy reward him who hath served his enemy? Sure it is, the doctrine of the avail of a death-bed repentance cannot easily be reconciled with God's purposes and intentions to have us live a good life; for it would reconcile us to the hopes of heaven for a few thoughts, or words, or single actions, when our life is done: it takes away the benefit of many graces, and the use of more, and the necessity of all.

47. For let it be seriously weighed, to what purpose is the variety of God's grace? what use is there of preventing, restraining, concomitant, subsequent, and persevering grace, unless it be in order to a religious conversation? And by deferring repentance to the last we despoil our souls, and rob the Holy Ghost of the glory of many rays and holy influences with which the church is watered and refreshed, that it may 'grow from grace to grace,' till it be consummate in glory. It takes away the very being of chastity and temperance; no such virtues, according to this doctrine, need to be named among Christians. For the dying person is not in capacity to exercise these: and then either they are troublesome, without which we may do well enough; or else the condition of the unchaste and intemperate clinic is sad and deplorable. For how can he eject those devils of lusts and drunkenness and gluttony, from whom the disease hath taken all powers of election and variety of choice; unless it be possible to root out long-contracted habits in a moment, or acquire the

bits of chastity, sobriety and temperance, those self-denying and laborious graces, without doing a single act of the respective virtues in order to obtaining of habits; unless it be so that God will infuse habits into us more immediately than he creates our reasonable souls, in an instant, and without the co-operation of the susceptible, without the working out our salvation with fear, and without 'giving all diligence, and running with patience, and resisting unto blood, and striving unto the last, and enduring unto the end in a long fight and a long race?' If God infuses such habits, why have we laws given, and are commanded to work, and to do our duty with such a succession and constant diligence, as if the habits were to be acquired, to which indeed God promises and ministers his aids, still leaving us the persons obliged to the law and the labour, as we are capable of the reward? I need not instance any more. But this doctrine of a death-bed repentance is inconsistent with the duties of mortification, with all the vindictive and punitive parts of repentance in exterior circumstances, with the precepts of waiting and watchfulness and preparation, and standing in a readiness against 'the coming of the bridegroom,' with the patience of well-doing, with exemplary living, with the imitation of the life of Christ, and conformities to his passion, with the kingdom, and dominion, and growth of grace. And lastly, it goes about to defeat one of God's great purposes: for God, therefore, concealed the time of our death, that we might always stand upon our guard; the holy Jesus told us so: 'Watch, for ye know not what hour the Lord will come:' but this makes men seem more crafty in their late-begun piety,

than God was provident and mysterious in concealing the time of our dissolution.

48. And now, if it be demanded how long time must our repentance and holy living take up? what is the last period of commencement of our piety, after which it will be unaccepted or effectual? will a month, or a year, or three years, or seven suffice? (for since every man fails of his first condition, and makes violent recessions from the state of his redemption and his baptismal grace,) how long may he lie in that state of recession with hopes of salvation? To this I answer, he cannot lie in sin a moment without hazarding his eternity: every instant is a danger, and all the parts of its duration do increase it; and there is no answer to be given antecedently, and by way of rule, but all the hopes of our restitution depend upon the event. It is just as if we should ask, how long will it be before an infant comes to the perfect use of reason, or before a fool will become wise, or an ignorant person become excellently learned? The answer to such questions must be given according to the capacity of the man, to the industry of his person, to his opportunities or hinderances, to his life and health, and to God's blessing upon him. Only this; every day of deferring it lessens our hopes, and increases the difficulty: and when this increasing, divisible difficulty comes to the last period of impossibility, God only knows, because he measures the thoughts of man, and comprehends his powers in a span, and himself only can tell how he will correspond in those assistances without which we can never be restored. 'Agree with thy adversary quickly, while thou art in the way: quickly.' And therefore the Scripture sets down no other

time than to-day; 'while it is yet called to-day.' But because it will every day be called to-day, we must remember that our duty is such as requires a time, a duration; it is a course, a race that is set before us, a duty requiring patience, and longanimity, and perseverance, and great care and diligence, that we faint not. And supposing we could gather probability by circumstances, when the last period of our hopes begins; yet he that stands out as long as he can, gives probation that he came not in of good-will or choice, that he loves not the present service, that his body is present, but his heart is estranged from the yoke of his present employment; and then all that he can do is odious to God, being a sacrifice without a heart, an offertory of shells and husks, while the devil and the man's lusts have devoured the kernels.

49. So that this question is not to be asked beforehand; but after a man hath done much of the work, and in some sense lived holily, then he may inquire into his condition, whether, if he persevere in that, he may hope for the mercies of Jesus. But he that inquires beforehand, as commonly he means ill, so he can be answered by none but God; because the satisfaction of such a vain question depends upon future contingencies, and accidents depending upon God's secret pleasure and predestination. He that repents but to-day, repents late enough, that he put it off from yesterday. It may be that some may begin to-day, and find mercy; and to another person it may be too late: but no man is safe or wise that puts it off till to-morrow. And that it may appear how necessary it is to begin early, and that the work is of difficulty and continuance, and that time still increases the objections,

it is certain that all the time that is lost must be redeemed by something in the sequel equivalent, or fit to make up the breach, and to cure the wounds long since made, and long festering. And this must be done by doing the first works, by something that God hath declared he will accept instead of them : the intention of the following actions and the frequent repetition must make up the defect in the extension and co-existence with a longer time. It was an act of an heroical repentance and great detestation of the crime, which Thomas Cantipratanus relates of a young gentleman condemned to die for robberies ; who, endeavouring to testify his repentance, and as far as was then permitted him to expiate the crime, begged of the judge that tormentors might be appointed him, that he might be long a-dying, and be cut in small pieces ; that the severity of the execution might be proportionable to the immensity of his sorrow and greatness of the iniquity. Such great acts do facilitate our pardon, and hasten the restitution, and a few days comprise the elapsed duty of many months. But to rely upon such acts is the last remedy, and like unlikely physic to a despairing person ; if it does well, it is well ; if it happen otherwise, he must thank himself, it is but what in reason he could expect. The Romans sacrificed a dog to Mana Geneta, and prayed, *Nē quis domi natorum bonus fiat*, that none of their domestics might be good ;¹ that is, that they might not die, (saith Plutarch,) because dead people are called good. But if they be so only when they die, they will hardly find the reward of goodness

¹ Τελευτῶντες χρηστοί. Ῥωμαϊκ. κεφ. νβ'. Μηδένα χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτινύναι. Plutarch. *ibid.* ex Aristotele.

in the reckonings of eternity, when to kill and to make good is all one : (as Aristotle observed it to be in the Spartan covenant with the Tegeatæ, and as it is in the case of penitents never mending their lives till their lives be done :) that goodness is fatal, and the prologue of an eternal death.

50. I conclude this point with the words of St. Paul : God 'will render to every man according to his deeds : to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality,' (to them) 'eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,' (to them) 'indignation and wrath : tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil.'¹

51. Having now discoursed of repentance upon distinct principles, I shall not need to consider upon those particulars which are usually reckoned parts or instances of repentance ; such as are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Repentance is the fulfilling all righteousness, and includes in it whatsoever is matter of Christian duty and expressly commanded ; such as is contrition or godly sorrow, and confession to God, both which are declared in Scripture to be in order to pardon and purgation of our sins. 'A contrite and a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise ;' and, 'If we confess our sins, God is just and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.' To which add concerning satisfaction, that it is a judging and punishing of ourselves ; that it also is an instrument of repentance, and a fruit of godly sorrow, and of good advantage for obtaining mercy

¹ Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

of God: for indignation and revenge are reckoned by St. Paul effects of a godly sorrow; and the blessing which encourages its practice is instanced by the same saint: 'When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord;' but 'if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged:' where he expounds judged by chastened; if we were severer to ourselves, God would be gentle and remiss. And there are only these two cautions to be annexed, and then the direction is sufficient: 1. That when promise of pardon is annexed to any of these or another grace, or any good action, it is not to be understood as if alone it were effectual either to the abolition or pardon of sins, but the promise is made to it as to a member of the whole body of piety. In the coadunation and conjunction of parts the title is firm, but not at all in distinction and separation: for it is certain, if we fail in one, we are guilty of all; and therefore cannot be repaired by any one grace, or one action, or one habit. And therefore 'charity hides a multitude of sins,' with men and with God too; 'alms deliver from death; humility pierceth the clouds,' and will not depart before its answer be gracious; and 'hope purifieth, and makes not ashamed;' and patience, and faith, and piety to parents, and prayer, and the eight beatitudes 'have promises of this life, and of that which is to come' respectively; and yet nothing will obtain these promises but the harmony and uniting of these graces in a holy and habitual confederation. And when we consider the promise as singularly relating to that one grace, it is to be understood comparatively; that is, such persons are

¹ James, v. 20; Tob. iv. 10; 1 John, iii. 3; Rom. v. 5;
1 Tim. iv. 8.

happy if compared with those who have contrary dispositions : for such a capacity does its portion of the work towards complete felicity, from which the contrary quality does estrange and disentitle us.

2. The special and minute actions and instances of these three preparatives of repentance are not under any command in the particulars, but are to be disposed of by Christian prudence, in order to those ends to which they are most aptly instrumental and designed. Such as are fasting and corporeal severities in satisfaction, or the punitive parts of repentance : they are either vindictive of what is past, and so are proper acts or effects of contrition and godly sorrow ; or else they relate to the present and future state, and are intended for correction or emendation, and so are of good use as they are medicinal, and in that proportion not to be omitted. And so is confession to a spiritual person an excellent instrument of discipline, a bridle of intemperate passions, an opportunity of restitution. ‘ Ye which are spiritual, restore such a person overtaken in a fault,’¹ (saith the apostle). It is the application of a remedy, the consulting with the guide, and the best security to a weak, or lapsed, or an ignorant person ; in all which cases he is unfit to judge his own questions, and in these he is also committed to the care and conduct of another. But these special instances of repentance are capable of suppletories, and are like the corporeal works of mercy, necessary only in time and place, and in accidental obligations. He that relieves the poor, or visits the sick, choosing it for the instance of his charity, though he do not redeem captives, is charitable,

¹ Gal. vi. 1.

and hath done his alms. And he that cures his sin by any instruments, by external, or interior and spiritual remedies, is penitent, though his diet be not ascetic and afflictive, or his lodging hard, or his sorrow bursting out into tears, or his expressions passionate and dolorous.¹ I only add this, that acts of public repentance must be by using the instruments of the church, such as she hath appointed ; of private, such as by experience, or by reason, or by the counsel we can get, we shall learn to be most effective of our penitential purposes. And yet it is a great argument that the exterior expressions of corporeal severities are of good benefit, because in all ages wise men and severe penitents have chosen them for their instruments.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who wert pleased in mercy to look upon us when we were in our blood, to reconcile us when we were enemies, to forgive us in the midst of our provocations of thy infinite and eternal Majesty, finding out a remedy for us which mankind could never ask, even making an atonement for us by the death of thy Son, sanctifying us by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and thy all-hallowing and divine Spirit ; let thy graces so perpetually assist and encourage my endeavours, conduct my will, and fortify my intentions, that I may persevere in that holy condition which thou hast put me in by the grace of the covenant, and the mercies of the Holy Jesus. O let me never fall into those sins, and retire to that vain conversation, from which the eternal and merciful Saviour of the world hath redeemed me : but let me grow in grace, adding virtue to virtue,

¹ Vide Disc. of Mortification, Part. I ; and Disc. of Fasting, Part II.

educing my purposes to acts, and increasing my acts till they grow into habits, and my habits till they be confirmed, and still confirming them till they be consummate in a blessed and holy perseverance. Let thy preventing grace dash all temptations in their approach; let thy concomitant grace enable me to resist them in the assault, and overcome them in the fight: that my hopes be never discomposed, nor my faith weakened, nor my confidence made remiss, nor my title and portion in the covenant be lessened. Or if thou permittest me at any time to fall, (which, holy Jesu, avert for thy mercy and compassion sake,) yet let me not sleep in sin, but recall me instantly by the clamours of a nice and tender conscience, and the quickening sermons of the Spirit, that I may never pass from sin to sin, from one degree to another; lest sin should get the dominion over me, lest thou be angry with me, and reject me from the covenant, and I perish. Purify me from all uncleanness, sanctify my spirit, that I may be holy as thou art: and let me never provoke thy jealousy, nor presume upon thy goodness, nor distrust thy mercies, nor defer my repentance, nor rely upon vain confidence; but let me, by a constant, sedulous, and timely endeavour, make my calling and election sure, living to thee and dying to thee; that having sowed to the Spirit, I may, from thy mercies, reap in the Spirit bliss, and eternal sanctity, and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, our hope, and our mighty and ever-glorious Redeemer. Amen.

*Considerations upon Christ's Sermon on the Mount,
and of the Eight Beatitudes.*

1. THE holy Jesus being entered upon his prophetic office, in the first solemn sermon gave testimony that he was not only an interpreter of laws then in being, but also a lawgiver, and an angel of the new and everlasting covenant: which because God meant to establish with mankind by the mediation of his Son, by his Son also he now began to publish the conditions of it. And that the publi-

cation of the Christian law might retain some proportion at least and analogy of circumstance with the promulgation of the law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. And here he taught all the disciples; for what he was now to speak was to become a law, a part of the condition on which he established the covenant, and founded our hopes of heaven. Our excellent and gracious Lawgiver, knowing that the great argument in all practical disciplines is the proposal of the end, which is their crown and their reward, begins his sermon, as David began his most divine collection of hymns, with *blessedness*. And having enumerated eight duties, which are the rule of the spirits of Christians, he begins every duty with a beatitude, and concludes it with a reward; to manifest the reasonableness, and to invite and determine our choice to such graces which are circumscribed with felicities, which have blessedness in present possession, and glory in the consequence; which, in the midst of the most passive and afflictive of them, tells us that we are blessed: which is indeed a felicity, as a hope is good, or as a rich heir is rich, who, in the midst of his discipline and the severity of tutors and governors, knows he is designed to, and certain of a great inheritance.

2. The eight beatitudes, which are the duty of a Christian, and the rule of our spirit, and the special discipline of Christ, seem like so many paradoxes and impossibilities reduced to reason; and are indeed virtues made excellent by rewards, by the sublimity of grace, and the mercies of God, hallowing and crowning those habits which are despised by the world, and are esteemed the conditions of lower and less considerable people. But God ‘sees not

man sees,' and his rules of estimate and judgment are not borrowed from the exterior splendour, which is apt to seduce children, and cozen fools, and please the appetites of sense and abused fancy; but they are such as he makes himself, excellencies high, by abstractions and separations from things low, and us upon celestial appetites. And they are states of suffering rather than states of life: for the great employment of a Christian being to bear the cross, Christ laid the pedestal so low, that the rewards were like rich mines interred in the deeps and inaccessible retirements, and did choose to build our felicities upon the torrents and violences of affliction and sorrow. Without these graces we cannot get heaven; and without sorrow and sad accidents we cannot exercise these graces. Such

3. First, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'¹ Poverty of spirit is in respect of secular affluence and abundance, or in respect of great opinion and high thoughts; either of which have divers acts and offices. That the first is one of the meanings of this text is certain, because St. Luke, repeating this beatitude, delivers plainly, 'Blessed are the poor,'² and to it he opposes riches. And our blessed Saviour speaks so conspicuously of riches and rich men, that he represents the condition to be full of danger and temptation: and St. James calls it full of sin, describing such men to be oppressors, litigious, proud, spiteful, and contentious.³ Which sayings, like all others of that nature, are to be understood in common and

¹ Προκοπή ψυχῆς, προκοπή ταπεινώσεως.

² Luke, vi. 20, 24. ³ James, ii. 6; v. 1, &c.

most frequent accidents; not regularly, but very improbable to be otherwise. For if we consider our vocation, St. Paul informs us, that 'not many mighty, not many noble, are called;' but 'God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith.' And how 'hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven,' our great Master hath taught us, by saying, 'it is more easy for a camel to pass through a needle's eye.'¹ And the reason is, because of the infinite temptation which riches minister to our spirits; it being such an opportunity of vices, that nothing remains to countermand the act but a strong, resolute, unaltered, and habitual purpose, and pure love of virtue: riches in the meantime offering to us occasions of lust, fuel for revenge, instruments of pride, entertainment of our desires, engaging them in low, worldly, and sottish appetites; inviting us to show our power in oppression, our greatness in vanities, our wealth in prodigal expenses, and to answer the importunity of our lusts, not by a denial, but by a correspondence and satisfaction, till they

¹ Nulli fortunæ minus bene quàm optimæ creditur. Alià felicitate ad tuendam felicitatem est opus. Sen.—"There is no kind of fortune so dangerous to be trusted as the best fortune. A second felicity is required to defend felicity."

"Ὁφελεις, ὦ τυφλὲ πλῆτε, μήτ' ἐν γῇ, μήτ' ἐν θαλάττῃ, μήτ' ἐν ἡπείρῃ φανῆναι, ἀλλὰ τάρταρόν τε νάειν ἢ Ἀχέρονται· δὲ σὶ γὰρ πάντα ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακὰ. Timocr. Lyr.—"Thou oughtst, blind Pluto, neither in the land, nor in the sea, nor in any part of the universe to dwell, but in Tartarus and Acheron, for thou art the author of all ill to man."

"Ὁ δὲ πλῆτος ἡμᾶς, καθάπερ ἰατρὸς κακὸς τυφλὸς, (βλέποντας παρασβών) πάντας ποιεῖ. Antiphanes.—"Riches, like a bad physician, finds us in possession of our sight and sends us away blind."

Γαλακτοφάγων ἀβίων τε, δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων, dixit Homerus de Mysis et Hippomolgis, lib. xiii. Il. Justissimos et longævus dixit qui vesebantur lacte et cibo modesto.

come our mistresses, imperious, arrogant, tyrannical, and vain. But poverty is the sister of a good mind ; it ministers aid to wisdom, industry to our spirit, severity to our thoughts, soberness to our senses, modesty to our desires ; it restrains extravagancy and dissolution of appetites ; the next thing above our present condition, which is commonly the object of our wishes, being tempered a little, proportionable enough to nature, not straying beyond the limits of necessity or a moderate conveniency, or at farthest but to a free refreshment and recreation. And the cares of poverty are single and mean ; rather a fit employment correct our levities, than a business to impede our better thoughts : since a little thing supplies the needs of nature, and the earth and the fountain, with little trouble, minister food to us, and God's common providence and daily dispensation eases our cares, and makes them portable. But the cares and business of rich men are violences to our whole mind ; they are loads of memory, business for the understanding, work for two or three arts and sciences, employment for many servants to assist in, increase the appetite, and heighten the thirst ; and, by making their dropsy bigger, and their capacities fuller, they destroy all those opportunities and possibilities of charity in which only riches can be successful.

1. But it is not a mere poverty of possession which entitles us to the blessing, but a poverty of spirit ; that is, a contentedness in every state, an readiness to renounce all, when we are obliged in duty ; a refusing to continue a possession, when we see it must quit a virtue or a noble action ; a divorcing our affections from those gilded vanities ; a gene-

rous contempt of the world; and at no hand heaping riches, either with injustice or with avarice, either with wrong or impotency of action or affection. Not like Laberius, described by the poet, who thought nothing so criminal as poverty, and every spending of a sesterce was the loss of a moral virtue, and every gaining of a talent was an action glorious and heroical. But poverty of spirit accounts riches to be the servants of God first, and then of ourselves; being sent by God, and to return when he pleases, and all the while they are with us, to do his business. It is a looking upon riches and things of the earth, as they do look upon it from heaven, to whom it appears little and unprofitable. And because the residence of this blessed poverty is in the mind, and follows that it be here understood, that all that exinanition and renunciation, abjection and humility of mind, which depauperates the spirit, making it less worldly and more spiritual, is the duty here enjoined. For if a man throws away his gold, as did Crates the Theban, or the proud philosopher Diogenes, and yet leaves a spirit, high, airy, fantastical, and vain, pleasing himself, and with complacency reflecting upon his own act; his poverty is but a circumstance of pride, and the opportunity of an imaginary and secular greatness. Ananias and Sapphira renounced the world by selling their possessions; but because they were not 'poor in spirit,' but still retained the affections to the world, therefore they 'kept back part of the price,' and lost their hopes. The church of Laodicea was possessed with a spirit of pride, and flattered themselves in imaginary riches: they were not poor in spirit, but they were poor in possession and condi-

tion. These wanted humility, the other wanted a generous contempt of worldly things; and both were destitute of this grace.

5. The acts of this grace are, 1, to cast off all inordinate affection to riches. 2, In heart and spirit, that is, preparation of mind, to quit the possession of all riches; and actually so to do when God requires it: that is, when the retaining riches loses a virtue. 3, To be well pleased with the whole economy of God, his providence and dispensation of all things, being contented in all estates. 4, To employ that wealth God hath given us in actions of justice and religion. 5, To be thankful to God in all temporal losses. 6, Not to distrust God, or to be solicitous and fearful of want in the future. 7, To put off the spirit of vanity, pride, and fantastic complacency in ourselves, thinking lowly or meanly of whatsoever we are to do. 8, To prefer others before ourselves, doing honour and prelation to them; and either contentedly receiving affronts done to us, or modestly undervaluing ourselves. 9, Not to praise ourselves but when God's glory and the edification of our neighbour is concerned in it; nor willingly to hear others praise us. 10, To despoil ourselves of all interior propriety, denying our will in all instances of subordination to our superiors, and our own judgment in matters of difficulty and questions; permitting ourselves and our affairs to the advice of wiser men, and the decision of those who are trusted with the cure of souls. 11, Emptying ourselves of ourselves, and throwing ourselves wholly upon God, relying upon his providence, trusting his promises, craving his grace, and depending upon his

strength for all our actions, and deliverances, and duties.

6. The reward promised is the kingdom of heaven. 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom.' To be little in our own eyes is to be great in God's: the poverty of the spirit shall be rewarded with the riches of the kingdoms, of both kingdoms—that of heaven is expressed. Poverty is the highway of eternity. But, therefore, the kingdom of grace is taken in the way, the way to our country; and it being the forerunner of glory, and nothing else but an antedated eternity, is part of the reward as well as of our duty. And, therefore, whatsoever is signified by kingdom in the appropriate evangelical sense, is there intended as a recompence. For the kingdom of the gospel is a congregation and society of Christ's poor, of his little ones; they are the communion of saints, and their present entertainment is knowledge of the truth, remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and what else in Scripture is signified to be a part or grace or condition of the kingdom. For 'to the poor the gospel is preached;'¹ that is, to the poor the kingdom is promised and ministered.

7. Secondly, 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' This duty of Christian mourning is commanded, not for itself, but in order to many good ends. 1, It is in order to patience: tribulation worketh patience;² and, therefore, 'we glory in them,' saith St. Paul. And St. James: 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith (viz. by afflictions) worketh patience.'³

¹ Matt. xi. 5.

² Rom. v. 3. *Gaudet patientia duria.*

³ James, i. 2, 3.

2, It is in order to repentance: 'Godly sorrow worketh repentance.' 3, By consequence it is in order to pardon: for 'a contrite heart God will not reject.' 4, And after all this it leads to joy. And, therefore, St. James preached a homily of sorrow: 'Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep,' that is, in penitential mourning; for he adds, 'Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.'² The acts of this duty are: 1, To bewail our own sins. 2, To lament our infirmities, as they are principles of sin, and recessions from our first state. 3, To weep for our own evils and sad accidents, as they are issues of the divine anger. 4, To be sad for the miseries and calamities of the church, or of any member of it, and indeed, to 'weep with every one that weeps;' that is, not to rejoice in his evil, but to be compassionate, and pitiful, and apt to bear another's burthen. 5, To avoid all loose and immoderate laughter, all dissolution of spirit and manners, uncomely jestings, free revellings, carnivals, and balls, which are the perdition of precious hours, (allowed us for repentance and possibilities of heaven,) which are the instruments of infinite vanity, idle talking, impertinency, and lust, and very much below the severity and retiredness of a Christian spirit. Of this Christ became to us the great example; for St. Basil reports a tradition of him, that he never laughed, but wept often. And if we mourn with him, we shall also rejoice in the joys of eternity.

8. Thirdly, 'Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the earth:' that is, the gentle and softer spirits, persons not turbulent or unquiet, not

¹ 2 Cor. vii. 10.

² James, iv. 9, 10

clamorous or impatient, not over bold or impudent, not querulous or discontented ; not nice or curious ; but men who submit to God, and know no choice of fortune, or employment, or success, but what God chooses for them ; having peace at home, because nothing from without does discompose their spirit. In sum, meekness is an indifferency to any exterior accident, a being reconciled to all conditions and instances of providence, a reducing ourselves to such an evenness and interior satisfaction, that there is the same conformity of spirit and fortune by complying with my fortune, as if my fortune did comply with my spirit. And therefore in the order of beatitudes, meekness is set between mourning and desire, that it might balance and attemper those actions by indifferency, which by reason of their abode are apt to the transportation of passion. The reward expressed is a possession of the earth, that is, a possession of all which is excellent here below, to consign him to a future glory, as Canaan was a type of heaven.¹ For meekness is the best cement and combining of friendships, it is a great endearment of us to our company. It is an ornament to have a meek and quiet spirit, a prevention of quarrels, and pacifier of wrath ; it purchaseth peace, and is itself a quietness of spirit. It is the greatest affront to all injuries in the world ; for it returns them upon the injurious, and makes them useless, ineffective, and innocent ; and is an antidote against all the evil consequents of anger and adversity, and tramples upon the usurping passions of the irascible faculty.

9. But the greatest part of this passage and

¹ Mansuetus et æquus secundum Aristot. est εὐτυχῶν μέτριος, et ἀτυχῶν μεγάλῳ ψυχῳ.

landscape is sky: and as a man in all countries
 can see more of heaven than of the earth he dwells
 in, so also he may in this promise. For although
 the Christian hears the promise of the inheritance
 of the earth, yet he must place his eye and fix his
 heart upon heaven, which by looking downward
 also upon this promise, as in a vessel of limpid
 water, he may see by reflection, without looking
 upwards by a direct intuition. It is heaven that
 is designed by this promise as well as by any of
 the rest; though this grace takes in also the re-
 freshments of the earth, by equivalence and a sup-
 plementary design. But here we have no abiding city,
 and therefore no inheritance; this is not our
 country, and therefore here cannot be our portion;
 unless we choose, as did the prodigal, to go into a
 strange country, and spend our portion with riot-
 ous and beastly living, and forfeit our Father's
 blessing. The devil, carrying our blessed Saviour
 to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms
 of the world: but, besides that they were offered
 upon ill conditions, they were not eligible by him
 for any. And neither are they to be chosen by
 us for our inheritance and portion evangelical;
 for the gospel is founded upon better promises,
 and therefore the hopes of a Christian ought not
 to determine upon any thing less than heaven.
 Indeed our blessed Saviour chose to describe
 this beatitude in the words of the Psalmist, so
 inviting his disciples to an excellent precept, by
 the insinuation of those Scriptures which them-
 selves admitted. But as the earth which was
 promised to the meek man in David's psalm,
 is no other earth but the *terra promissionis*, the
 land of Canaan; if we shall remember that this
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land of promise was but a transition and an allegory to a greater and more noble, that it was but a type of heaven, we shall not see cause to wonder why the holy Jesus, intending heaven for the reward of this grace also, together with the rest, did call it 'the inheritance of the earth.' For now is revealed to us 'a new heaven and a new earth; an habitation made without hands, eternal in the heavens.' And he understands nothing of the excellency of Christian religion, whose affections dwell below, and are satisfied with a portion of dirt and corruption. 'If we be risen with Christ, let us seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.' But if a Christian desires to take possession of this earth in his way, as his inheritance or portion, he hath reason to fear it will be his all. We have but one inheritance, one country, and here we are strangers and pilgrims. Abraham told Dives that he had enjoyed his good things here; he had the inheritance of the earth, in the crass material sense; and therefore he had no other portion but what the devils have. And when we remember that persecution is the lot of the church, and that poverty is her portion, and her *quantum* is but food and raiment at the best; and that patience is her support, and hope her refreshment, and self-denial her security, and meekness is all her possession and title to a subsistence, it will appear certain, that as 'Christ's kingdom was not of this world,' so neither shall his saints have their portion in that which is not his kingdom. They are miserable if they do not reign with him, and he never reigned here; but 'if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him hereafter.' True it is,

Christ promised to him that should lose any interest for his sake, the restitution of an hundred-fold in this world. But as the sense of that cannot be literal—for he cannot receive a hundred mothers or a hundred wives—so whatsoever that be, it is to be enjoyed with persecution. And then such a portion of the earth as Christ hath expressed in figure, and shall by way of recompense restore us, and such a recompense as we can enjoy with persecution, and such an enjoyment as is consistent with our having lost all our temporals, and such an acquist and purchase of it as is not destructive of the grace of meekness; all that we may enter into our account as part of our lot, and the emanation from the holy promise. But in the foot of this account we shall not find any great affluence of temporal accruements. However it be, although, when a meek man hath earthly possessions, by his grace he is taught how to use them and how to part with them; yet if he hath them not by the virtue here commanded, he is not suffered to use any thing violent towards the acquiring them, not so much as a violent passion or a stormy imagination: for then he loses his meekness, and whatever he gets can be none of the reward of this grace. He that fights for temporals, (unless by some other appendant duty he be obliged,) loses his title, by striving incompetently for the reward; he cuts off that hand by which alone he can receive it. For unless he be indeed meek, he hath no right to what he calls ‘the inheritance of the earth:’ and he that is not content to want the inheritance of the earth, when God requires him, is not meek. So that if this beatitude be understood in a temporal sense, it is an offer of a reward upon a condition

we shall be without it, and be content too. For, in every sense of the word, meekness implies a just satisfaction of the Spirit, and acquiescence in every estate or contingency whatsoever, though we have no possessions but of a good conscience, no bread but that of carefulness, no support but that of the Holy Spirit, and a providence ministering to our natural necessities by an extemporary provision. And certain it is, the meekest of Christ's servants, the apostles and the primitive Christians, had no other verification of his promise but this, that, 'rejoicing in tribulation,' and 'knowing how to want as well as how to abound, through many tribulations they entered into the kingdom of heaven:' for that is the country in which they are co-heirs with Jesus. But if we will certainly understand what this reward is, we may best know it by understanding the duty; and this we may best learn from him that gave it in commandment. 'Learn of me, for I am meek,' said the holy Jesus: and to him was promised that 'the uttermost ends of the earth should be his inheritance;' and yet he died first, and went to heaven before it was verified to him in any sense, but only of content, and desire, and joy in suffering, and in all variety of accident. And thus also, if we be meek, we may receive the inheritance of the earth.

10. The acts of this grace are, 1. To submit to all the instances of divine providence, not repining at any accident which God hath chosen for us, and given us as part of our lot, or a punishment of our deserving, or an instrument of virtue; not envying the gifts, graces, or prosperities of our neighbours. 2. To pursue the interest and employment of our calling in which we are placed, not despising the

meanness of any work, though never so disproportionate to our abilities. 3. To correct all malice, wrath, evil-speaking, and inordination of anger, whether in respect of the object or the degree. 4. At no hand to entertain any thoughts of revenge or retaliation of evil. 5. To be affable and courteous in our deportment towards all persons of our society and intercourse. 6. Not to censure or reproach the weakness of our neighbour, but support his burden, cover and cure his infirmities. 7. To excuse what may be excused, lessening severity, and being gentle in reprehension. 8. To be patient in afflictions, and thankful under the cross. 9. To endure reproof, with shame at ourselves for deserving it, and thankfulness to the charitable physician that offers the remedy. 10. To be modest and fairly-mannered towards our superiors; obeying, reverencing, speaking honourably of and doing honour to aged persons, and all whom God hath set over us, according to their several capacities. 11. To be ashamed and very apprehensive of the unworthiness of a crime; at no hand losing our fear of the invisible God, and our reverence to visible societies, or single persons. 12. To be humble in our exterior addresses and behaviour in churches and all holy places. 13. To be temperate in government, not imperious, unreasonable, insolent, or oppressive, lest we provoke to wrath those whose interest of person and of religion we are to defend [or promote. 14. To do our endeavour to expiate any injury we did, by confessing the fact, and offering satisfaction, and asking forgiveness.

11. Fourthly, 'Blessed are they that hunger and

thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. This grace is the greatest indication of spiritual health, when our appetite is right, strong, and regular; when we are desirous of spiritual nourishment, when we long for manna, and 'follow Christ for loaves,' not of a low and terrestrial gust, but of that 'bread which came down from heaven.' Now there are two sorts of holy repast which are the proper objects of our desires:—the bread of heaven, which is proportioned to our hunger; that is, all those immediate emanations from Christ's pardon of our sins, and redemption from our former conversation, holy laws and commandments. To this food there is also a spiritual beverage to quench our thirst; and this is the effects of the Holy Spirit, who first 'moved upon the waters of baptism,' and afterwards became to us 'the breath of life,' giving us holy inspirations and assistances, refreshing our wearinesses, cooling our fevers, and allaying all our intemperate passions; making us holy, humble, resigned, and pure, according to the pattern in the mount, 'even as our Father is pure.' So that the first redemption and pardon of us by Christ's merits is the bread of life, for which we must hunger; and the refreshments and daily emanations of the Spirit, who is the spring of comforts and purity, is that drink which we must thirst after. A being first reconciled to God by Jesus, and a being sanctified and preserved in purity by the Holy Spirit, is the adequate object of our desires. Some to hunger and thirst best fancy the analogy and proportion of the two sacraments, the waters of baptism, and the food of the eucharist; some the bread of the patin, and the wine of the

chalice. But it is certain they signify one desire expressed by the most impatient and necessary of our appetites, hungering and thirsting. And the object is whatsoever is the principle or the effect, the beginning, or the way, or the end of righteousness; that is, the mercies of God, the pardon of Jesus, the graces of the Spirit, a holy life, a holy death, and a blessed eternity.

12. The blessing and reward of this grace is fullness or satisfaction; which relates immediately to heaven, because nothing here below can satisfy us. The grace of God is our *viaticum*, and entertains us by the way; its nature is to increase, not to satisfy the appetites: not because the grace is empty and unprofitable, as are the things of the world; but because it is excellent, but yet in order to a greater perfection, it invites the appetite by its present goodness, but it leaves it unsatisfied, because it is not yet arrived at glory: and yet the present imperfection, in respect of all the good of this world's possession, is rest and satisfaction, and is imperfect only in respect of its own future complement and perfection; and our hunger continues, and our needs return, because all we have is but an antepast. But the glories of eternity are also the proper object of our desires: that is the reward of God's grace, that is 'the crown of righteousness.' 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.'¹ The acts of this virtue are multiplied according to its object; for they are only, 1, to desire; and, 2, pray for; and, 3, labour for all

¹ Psalm xvii. 15.

that which is righteousness in any sense. 1. For the pardon of our sins; 2, for the graces and sanctification of the Spirit; 3, for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; 4, for the reception of the holy sacrament, and all the instruments, ordinances, and ministries of grace; 5, for the grace of perseverance; 6, and finally, for the crown of righteousness.

13. Fifthly, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.' Mercy is the greatest mark and token of the holy, elect, and predestinate persons in the world. 'Put ye on, (my beloved,) as the elect of God, the bowels of mercy, holy and precious.'¹ For mercy is an attribute, in the manifestation of which as all our happiness consists, so God takes greatest complacency, and delights in it above all his other works. He 'punishes to the third and fourth generation,' but 'shows mercy unto thousands.' Therefore the Jews say that Michael flies with one wing, and Gabriel with two; meaning, that the pacifying angel, the minister of mercy, flies swift; but the exterminating angel, the messenger of wrath, is slow. And we are called to our approximation to God by the practice of this grace; for we are made 'partakers of the divine nature,' by being 'merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful.' This mercy consists in the affections, and in the effects and actions: in both which the excellency of this Christian precept is eminent, above the goodness of the moral precept of the old philosophers, and the piety and charity of the Jews, by virtue of the Mosaic law. The stoic philoso-

¹ Col. iii. 12.

phers affirm it to be the duty of a wise man to succour and help the necessities of indigent and miserable persons; but at no hand to pity them, or suffer any trouble or compassion in our affections: for they intended that a wise person should be dispassionate, unmoved, and without disturbance in every accident and object and concernment. But the blessed Jesus, who came to reconcile us to his Father, and purchase us an entire possession, did intend to redeem us from sin, and make our passions obedient and apt to be commanded; even and moderate in temporal affairs, but high and active in some instances of spiritual concernment; and in all instances, that the affection go along with the grace; that we must be as merciful in our compassion, as compassionate in our exterior expressions and actions. The Jews, by the prescript of their law, were to be merciful to all their nation and confederates in religion; and this their mercy was called justice: 'He hath dispersed abroad and given to the poor: his righteousness [or justice] remaineth for ever.' But the mercies of a Christian are to extend to all: 'Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith.'¹ And this diffusion of a mercy, not only to brethren, but to aliens and enemies, is that which St. Paul calls goodness, still retaining the old appellative for Judaical mercy, [righteousness:] 'For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some will even dare to die.'² So that the Christian mercy must be a mercy of the whole man; the heart must

¹ Gal. vi. 10.

² Rom. v. 7. Syrus interpres non legit ὑπὲρ δικαίῃς, sed ἀδίκῃς, injusto.

be merciful, and the hand operating in the labour of love: and it must be extended to all persons of all capacities, according as their necessity requires and our ability permits, and our endearments and other obligations dispose of and determine the order.

14. The acts of this grace are, 1. To pity the miseries of all persons, and all calamities spiritual or temporal, having a fellow-feeling in their afflictions. 2. To be afflicted and sad in the public judgments imminent or incumbent upon a church or state, or family. 3. To pray to God for remedy for all afflicted persons. 4. To do all acts of bodily assistance to all miserable and distressed people: to relieve the poor, to redeem captives, to forgive debts to disabled persons, to pay debts for them, to lend them money, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, to rescue persons from dangers, to defend and relieve the oppressed, to comfort widows and fatherless children, to help them to right that suffer wrong; and, in brief, to do any thing of relief, support, succour, and comfort. 5. To do all acts of spiritual mercy; to counsel the doubtful, to admonish the erring, to strengthen the weak, to resolve the scrupulous, to teach the ignorant, and do any thing else which may be instrumental to his conversion, perseverance, restitution, and salvation, or may rescue him from spiritual dangers, or supply him in any ghostly necessity. The reward of this virtue is symbolical to the virtue itself: the grace and glory differing in nothing but degrees, and every virtue being a reward to itself. 'The merciful shall receive mercy:' mercy to help them in time of need; mercy from God, who will

not only give them the great mercies of pardon and eternity, but also dispose the hearts of others to pity and supply their needs, as they have done to others. For the present, there is nothing more noble than to be beneficial to others, and to 'lift up the poor out of the mire,' and rescue them from misery; it is to do the work of God: and for the future, nothing is a greater title to a mercy at the day of judgment, than to have showed mercy to our necessitous brother; it being expressed to be the only rule and instance in which Christ means to judge the world, in their mercy and charity or their unmercifulness respectively: 'I was hungry, and ye fed me,' or, 'ye fed me not:' and so we stand or fall in the great and eternal scrutiny. And it was the prayer of St. Paul, (Onesiphorus showed kindness to the great apostle,) 'the Lord show him a mercy in that day.' For a cup of charity, though but full of cold water, shall not lose its reward.

15. Sixthly, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' This purity of heart includes purity of hands. 'Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? even he that is of clean hands and a pure heart;' that is, 'he that hath not given his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour.' It signifies justice of action and candour of spirit, innocence of manners, and sincerity of purpose: it is one of those great circumstances that consummates charity; for 'the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.' 'A pure heart;' that is, a heart free from all carnal affec-

¹ Psalm xxiv. 3, 4.

² 1 Tim. 1, 5.

tions, not only in the matter of natural impurity, but also spiritual and immaterial; such as are heresies, (which are therefore impurities, because they mingle secular interest or prejudice with persuasions in religion,) seditions, hurtful and impious stratagems, and all those which St. Paul enumerates to be works or fruits of the flesh. A 'good conscience;' that is, a conscience either innocent or penitent, a state of grace, either a not having prevaricated, or a being restored to our baptismal purity. 'Faith unfeigned;' that also is the purity of sincerity, and excludes hypocrisy, timorous and half persuasions, neutrality and indifferency in matters of salvation. And all these do integrate the whole duty of charity. But 'purity,' as it is a special grace, signifies only honesty and uprightness of soul, without hypocrisy to God and dissimulation towards men; and then a freedom from all carnal desires, so as not to be governed or led by them. Chastity is the purity of the body, simplicity is the purity of the spirit, both are the sanctification of the whole man, for the entertainment of the spirit of purity and the spirit of truth.

16. The acts of this virtue are, 1. To quit all lustful thoughts, not to take delight in them, not to retain them or invite them; but as objects of displeasure to avert them from us. 2. To resist all lustful desires, and extinguish them by their proper correctories and remedies. 3. To refuse all occasions, opportunities, and temptations to impurity; denying to please a wanton eye, or to use a lascivious gesture, or to go into a danger, or to converse with an improper, unsafe object: 'hating the gar-

ment spotted with the flesh,' so St. Jude calls it ; and ' not to look upon a maid,' so Job ; ' not to sit with a woman that is a singer,' so the son of Sirach. 4. To be of a liberal soul, not mingling with affections of money and inclinations of covetousness ; not doing any act of violence, rapine, or injustice. 5. To be ingenuous in our thoughts, purposes, and professions, speaking nothing contrary to our intentions, but being really what we seem. 6. To give all our faculties and affections to God, without dividing interests between God and his enemies, without entertaining of any one crime in society with our pretences for God.¹ 7. Not to lie in sin, but instantly to repent of it and return, 'purifying our conscience from dead works.' 8. Not to dissemble our faith or belief, when we are required to its confession, pretending a persuasion complying with those from whom secretly we differ. Lust, covetousness, and hypocrisy are the three great enemies of this grace : they are the moles of our eyes, and the spots of our souls. The reward of purity is the vision beatifical. If we are 'pure as God is pure, we shall' also 'see him as he is : when we awake up after his likeness, we shall behold his presence.' To which in this world we are consigned by freedom from the cares of covetousness, the shame of lust, the fear of discovery, and the stings of an evil conscience ; which are the portion of the several impurities here forbidden.

17. Seventhly, 'Blessed are the peace-makers ; for they shall be called the children of God.' 'The wisdom of God is first pure, and then peaceable ;'² that is the order of the beatitudes. As soon as

¹ Plato vocat puritatem ἀπόκρισιν χειρόνων ἀπὸ βελτιόνων.

² James iii. 17.

Jesus was born, the angels sang a hymn: 'Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men:' signifying the two great errands upon which Christ was dispatched in his legation from heaven to earth. He is 'the Prince of Peace.' 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God.' The acts of this grace are, 1. To mortify our anger, peevishness, and fiery dispositions, apt to enkindle upon every slight accident, inadvertency, or misfortune of a friend or servant. 2. Not to be hasty, rash, provocative, or upbraiding in our language. 3. To live quietly and serenely in our families and neighbourhoods. 4. Not to backbite, slander, misreport, or undervalue any man, carrying tales, or sowing dissension between brethren. 5. Not to interest ourselves in the quarrels of others, by abetting either part, except where charity calls us to rescue the oppressed; and then also to do a work of charity without mixtures of uncharitableness. 6. To avoid all suits of law as much as is possible, without entrenching upon any other collateral obligation towards a third interest, or a necessary support for ourselves, or great conveniency for our families; or if we be engaged in law, to pursue our just interests with just means and charitable maintenance. 7. To endeavour by all means to reconcile disagreeing persons. 8. To endeavour by affability and fair deportment, to win the love of our neighbours. 9. To offer satisfaction to all whom we have wronged or slandered, and to remit the offences of others; and in trials of right to find out the most charitable expedient to determine it, as by indifferent arbitration, or something like it. 10. To be open, free, and ingenuous in reprehensions and fair expostulations with persons whom we conceive to have wronged

us, that no seed of malice or rancour may be latent in us, and upon the breath of a new displeasure break out into a flame. 11. To be modest in our arguings, disputings, and demands, not laying great interest upon trifles. 12. To moderate, balance, and temper our zeal by the rules of prudence and the allay of charity, that we quarrel not for opinions, nor entitle God in our impotent and mistaken fancies, nor lose charity for a pretence of an article of faith. 13. To pray heartily for our enemies, real or imaginary, always loving and being apt to benefit their persons, and to cure their faults by charitable remedies. 14. To abstain from doing all affronts, disgraces, slightings, and uncomely jeerings and mockings of our neighbour, not giving him appellatives of scorn or irrision. 15. To submit to all our superiors in all things, either doing what they command, or suffering what they impose; at no hand lifting our heel against those upon whom the characters of God and the marks of Jesus are imprinted in signal and eminent authority: such as are, principally, the king and then the bishops, whom God hath set to 'watch over our souls,' 16. Not to invade the possessions of our neighbours, or commence war, but when we are bound by justice and legal trust to defend the rights of others, or our own, in order to our duty. 17. Not to speak evil of dignities, or undervalue their persons, or publish their faults, or upbraid the levities of our governors; knowing that they also are designed by God, to be converted to us for castigation and amendment of us. 18. Not to be busy in other men's affairs; and then 'the peace of God will rest upon us.'¹ The reward

¹ Phil. iv. 9; 1 Thes. v. 23; 2 Thes. iii. 16.; Heb. xiii. 20.

is no less than the adoption and inheritance of sons; for 'he hath given unto us power to be called the sons of God:' for he is the father of peace, and the sons of peace are the sons of God, and therefore have a title to the inheritance of sons, to be heirs with God, and co-heirs with Christ¹ in the kingdom of peace, and essential and never-failing charity.

18. Eighthly, 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' This being the hardest command in the whole discipline of Jesus, is fortified with a double blessedness; for it follows immediately, 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you:' meaning, that all persecution for a cause of righteousness, though the affliction be instanced only in reproachful language, shall be a title to the blessedness. Any suffering for any good or harmless action is a degree of martyrdom. It being the greatest testimony in the world of the greatest love, to quit that for God which hath possessed our most natural, regular, and orderly affections. It is a preferring God's cause before our own interest; it is a loving of virtue without secular ends. It is the noble, the most resigned, ingenuous, valiant act in the world, to die for God, whom we never have seen; it is the crown of faith, the confidence of hope, and our greatest charity. The primitive churches, living under persecution, commented many pretty opinions concerning the state and special dignity of martyrs, apportioning to them one of the three coronets which themselves did knit, and supposed as pen-

¹ Rom. viii. 17.

dants to the great crown of righteousness. They made it suppletory of baptism, expiatory of sin, satisfactory of public penances : they placed them in bliss immediately, declared them to need no after-prayer, such as the devotion of those times used to pour upon the graves of the faithful. With great prudence they did endeavour to alleviate this burden, and sweeten the bitter chalice ; and they did it by such doctrines which did only remonstrate this great truth, that since no love was greater than to lay down our lives, nothing could be so great but God would indulge to them. And indeed, whatsoever they said in this, had no inconvenience ; nor would it now, unless men should think mere suffering to be sufficient to excuse a wicked life, or that they be invited to dishonour an excellent patience with the mixture of an impure action. There are many who would die for Christ if they were put to it, and yet will not quit a lust for him. Those are hardly to be esteemed Christ's martyrs : unless they be dead unto sin, their dying for an article or a good action will not pass the great scrutiny. And it may be boldness of spirit, or sullenness, or an honourable gallantry of mind, or something that is excellent in civil and political estimate, moves the person, and endears the suffering ; but that love only which keeps the commandments will teach us to die for love, and from love to pass to blessedness through the red sea of blood. And, indeed, it is more easy to die for chastity than to live with it ; and many women have been found, who suffered death under the violence of tyrants, for defence of their holy vows and purity, who, had they long continued amongst pleasures, courtships, curiosities, and importunities of men, might

perchance have yielded that to a lover which they denied to an executioner. St. Cyprian observes, that our blessed Lord, in admitting the innocent babes of Bethlehem first to die for him, did to all generations of Christendom consign this lesson, that only persons holy and innocent were fit to be Christ's martyrs. And I remember, that the prince of the Latin poets, over against the region and seats of infants, places in the shades below persons that suffered death wrongfully ; but adds, that this their death was not enough to place them in such blessed mansions, but the Judge first made inquiry into their lives, and accordingly designed their station. It is certain that such dyings or great sufferings are heroical actions, and of power to make great compensations, and redemptions of time, and of omissions and imperfections ; but if the man be unholy, so also are his sufferings : for heretics have died, and vicious persons have suffered in a good cause, and a dog's neck may be cut off in sacrifice, and swine's blood may fill the trench about the altar ; but God only accepts the sacrifice which is pure and spotless, first seasoned with salt, then seasoned with fire. The true martyr must have all the preceding graces, and then he shall receive all the beatitudes.

19. The acts of this duty are, 1. Boldly to confess the faith, nobly to exercise public virtues, not to be ashamed of any thing that is honest ; and rather to quit our goods, our liberty, our health, and life itself, than to deny what we are bound to affirm, or to omit what we are bound to do, or to pretend contrary to our present persuasion. 2. To rejoice in afflictions ; counting it honourable to be conformable to Christ, and to wear the cognizance

of Christianity, whose certain lot it is to suffer the hostility and violence of enemies visible and invisible. 3. Not to revile our persecutors, but to bear the cross with evenness, tranquillity, patience, and charity. 4. To offer our sufferings to the glory of God, and to join them with the passions of Christ, by doing it in love to God, and obedience to his sanctions, and testimony of some part of his religion, and designing it as a part of duty. The reward is the kingdom of heaven; which can be no other but eternal salvation, in case the martyrdom be consummate: and 'they also shall be made perfect;'¹ so the words of the reward were read in Clement's time. If it be less, it keeps its proportion: all suffering persons are the combination of saints; they make the church, they are the people of the kingdom, and heirs of the covenant: for if they be but confessors, and confess Christ in prison, though they never preach upon the rack or under the axe, yet Christ will confess them before his heavenly Father; and they shall have a portion where they shall never be persecuted any more.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O blessed Jesus, who art become to us the fountain of peace and sanctity, of righteousness and charity, of life and perpetual benediction, imprint in our spirits these glorious characterisms of Christianity, that we by such excellent dispositions may be consigned to the infinity of blessedness which thou camest to reveal,

¹ Ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἔσονται τέλειοι. Sic etiam olim legebatur hæc periodus; ὅτι ἔξουσι τόπον ὑπὲρ ἐδωχθήσονται.

and minister, and exhibit to mankind. Give us great humility of spirit; and deny us not, when we beg sorrow of thee, the mourning and sadness of true penitents, that we may imitate thy excellencies, and conform to thy sufferings. Make us meek, patient, indifferent, and resigned in all accidents, changes, and issues of divine Providence. Mortify all inordinate anger in us; all wrath, strife, contention, murmurings, malice, and envy; and interrupt, and then blot out all peevish dispositions and morosities, all disturbances and unevenness of spirit or of habit, that may hinder us in our duty. Oh! teach me so to hunger and thirst after the ways of righteousness, that it may be meat and drink to me to do thy Father's will. Raise my affections to heaven and heavenly things, fix my heart there, and prepare a treasure for me, which I may receive in the great diffusions and communications of thy glory. And in this sad interval of infirmity and temptations strengthen my hopes, and fortify my faith, by such emissions of light and grace from thy Spirit, that I may relish those blessings which thou preparest for thy saints with so great appetite, that I may despise the world and all its gilded vanities, and may desire nothing but the crown of righteousness and the paths that lead thither, the graces of thy kingdom, and the glories of it; that when I have served thee in holiness and strict obedience, I may reign with thee in the glories of eternity: for thou, O holy Jesus, art our hope, and our life, and glory, our exceeding great reward. Amen.

II.

Merciful Jesu, who art infinitely pleased in demonstrations of thy mercy, and didst descend into a state of misery, suffering persecution and affronts, that thou mightest give us thy mercy and reconcile us to thy Father, and make us partakers of thy purities, give unto us tender bowels, that we may suffer together with our calamitous and necessitous brethren; that we, having a fellow-feeling of their miseries, may use all our powers to help them, and ease ourselves of our common sufferings. But do thou, O holy Jesu, take from us also all our great calamities, the carnality of our affections, our sensualities and impurities, that we may first be pure, then peaceable, living in peace with all men, and preserving the peace which thou hast made for us with our God, that we may never commit a sin

which may interrupt so blessed an atonement. Let neither hope nor fear, tribulation nor anguish, pleasure nor pain, make us to relinquish our interest in thee, and our portion of the everlasting covenant. But give us hearts constant, bold, and valiant, to confess thee before all the world in the midst of all disadvantages and contradictory circumstances, choosing rather to beg, or to be disgraced, or afflicted, or to die, than quit a holy conscience, or renounce an article of Christianity: that we, either in act, when thou shalt call us, or always in preparation of mind, suffering with thee, may also reign with thee in the church triumphant, O holy and most merciful Saviour Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE X.

A Discourse upon that part of the Decalogue which the Holy Jesus adopted into the institution and obligation of Christianity.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus had described the characteristics of Christianity in these eight graces and beatitudes, he adds his injunctions, that in these virtues they should be eminent and exemplary, that they might adorn the doctrine of God: for he intended that the gospel should be as leaven in a lump of dough, to season the whole mass; and that Christians should be the instruments of communicating the excellency and reputation of this holy institution to all the world. Therefore, Christ calls them salt and light, and the societies of Christians a city set upon a hill, and a light set in a candlestick, whose office and energy is to illuminate all the vicinage; which is also expressed in these preceptive words: ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,

and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Which I consider not only as a circumstance of other parts, but as a precise duty itself, and one of the sanctions of Christianity, which hath so confederated the souls of the disciples of the institution, that it hath in some proportion obliged every man to take care of his brother's soul: and since reverence to God and charity to our brother are the two greatest ends which the best laws can have, this precept of exemplary living is enjoined in order to them both. We must shine as lights in the world, that God may be glorified, and our brother edified; that the excellency of the act may endear the reputation of the religion, and invite men to confess God, according to the sanctions of so holy an institution. And if we be curious that vanity do not mingle in the intention, and that the intention do not spoil the action, and that we suffer not our lights to shine that men may magnify us, and not glorify God; this duty is soon performed by way of adherence to our other actions, and hath no other difficulty in it, but that it will require our prudence and care to preserve the simplicity of our purposes and humility of our spirit, in the midst of that excellent reputation, which will certainly be consequent to a holy and exemplary life.

2. But since the holy Jesus hath set us up to be lights in the world, he took care we should not be stars of the least magnitude, but eminent, and such as might, by their great emissions of light, give evi-

¹ "Ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχῇ, τῶτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί. Just. Mar.—"As the soul is in the body, so are Christians in the world." Sic S. Paulus, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ. Phil. ii. 15.

dence of their being immediately derivative from the Sun of righteousness. He was now giving his law, and meant to retain so much of Moses, as Moses had of natural and essential justice and charity, and superadd many degrees of his own; that as far as Moses was exceeded by Christ in the capacity of a lawgiver, so far Christianity might be more excellent and holy than the Mosaical sanctions. And therefore, as a preface to the Christian law, the holy Jesus declares, that 'unless our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,' that is, of the stricter sects of the Mosaical institution, 'we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Which not only relates to the prevaricating practices of the Pharisees, but even to their doctrines and commentaries upon the law of Moses; as appears evidently in the following instances. For if all the excellency of Christianity had consisted in the mere command of sincerity, and prohibition of hypocrisy, it had nothing in it proportionable to those excellent promises and clearest revelations of eternity there expressed, nor of a fit employment for the designation of a special and a new lawgiver, whose laws were to last for ever, and were established upon foundations stronger than the pillars of heaven and earth.

3. But St. Paul, calling the law of Moses 'a law of works,'¹ did well insinuate what the doctrine of the Jews was concerning the degrees and obligations of justice. For besides that it was a law of works in opposition to the law of faith, (and so the sense of it is formerly explicated,²) it is also a law

¹ Rom. iii. 27.

² Vide Considerat. of Christ's first preaching, n. 3.

of works, in opposition to the law of the spirit: and it is understood to be such a law which required the exterior obedience; such a law according to which St. Paul so lived, that no man could reprove him; that is, the judges could not tax him with prevarication; such a law which, being in very many degrees carnal and material, did not with much severity exact the intention and purposes spiritual. But the gospel is 'the law of the spirit.' If they failed in the exterior work, it was accounted to them for sin; but to Christians nothing becomes a sin, but a failing and prevaricating spirit. For the outward act is such an emanation of the interior, that it enters into the account for the relation sake, and for its parent. When God hath put a duty into our hands, if our spirits be right, the work will certainly follow: but the following work receives its acceptance, not from the value the Christian law hath precisely put upon it, but because the spirit from whence it came hath observed its rule. The law of charity is acted and expressed in works, but hath its estimate from the spirit. Which discourse is to be understood in a limited and qualified signification. For then also God required the heart, and interdicted the very concupiscences of our irregular passions, at least in some instances: but because much of their law consisted in the exterior, and the law appointed not, nor yet intimated any penalty to evil thoughts, and because the expiation of such interior irregularities was easy, implicit, and involved in their daily sacrifices without special trouble, therefore the old law was 'a law of works;' that is, especially and in its first intention. But this being less perfect, the holy Jesus inverted

the order. 1. For very little of Christianity stands upon the outward action : (Christ having appointed but two sacraments immediately :) and, 2, a greater restraint is laid upon the passions, desires, and first motions of the spirit, than under the severity of Moses : and, 3, they are threatened with the same curses of a sad eternity, with the acts proceeding from them : and, 4, because the obedience of the spirit does in many things excuse the want of the outward act, God always requiring at our hands what he hath put in our power, and no more : and, 5, lastly, because the spirit is the principle of all actions moral and spiritual, and certainly productive of them when they are not impeded from without ; therefore the holy Jesus hath secured the fountain, as knowing that the current must needs be healthful and pure, if it proceeds through pure channels, from a limpid and unpolluted principle.

4. And certainly it is much for the glory of God, to worship him with a religion whose very design looks upon God as 'the searcher of our hearts,' and lord of our spirits ; who judges the purposes as a God, and does not only take his estimate from the outward action, as a man. And it is also a great reputation to the institution itself, that it purifies the soul, and secures the secret cogitations of the mind. It punishes covetousness as it judges rapine ; it condemns a sacrilegious heart as soon as an irreligious hand ; it detests hating of our brother by the same aversion which it expresses against doing him affronts. He that curses in his heart shall die the death of an explicit and bold blasphemer : murmur and repining is against the laws of Christianity. But either by the remissness of Moses's law, or the gentler execution of it, or the

innovating or lessening glosses of the Pharisees, he was esteemed innocent whose actions were according to the letter, not whose spirit was conformed to the intention and more secret sanctity of the law. So that our righteousness must therefore exceed the Pharisaical standard, because our spirits must be pure as our hands, and the heart as regular as the action; our purposes must be sanctified, and our thoughts holy: we must love our neighbour, as well as relieve him, and choose justice with adhesion of the mind, as well as carry her upon the palms of our hands. And therefore the prophets; foretelling the kingdom of the gospel and the state of this religion, call it 'a writing the laws of God in our hearts.' And St. Paul distinguishes the gospel from the law by this only measure: 'We are all Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, heirs of the same inheritance; only now we are not to be accounted Jews for the outward conformity to the law, but for the inward consent and obedience to those purities which were secretly signified by the types of Moses.' They of the law were Jews outwardly; their 'circumcision was outward in the flesh, their praise was of men: we are Jews inwardly; our circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, and our praise is of God:' that is, we are not judged by the outward act, but by the mind and the intention: and though the acts must follow in all instances where we can and where they are required; yet it is the less principal, and rather significative, than by its own strength and energy operative and accepted.

5. St. Clement of Alexandria saith, the Phari-

sees' righteousness consisted in the not doing evil, and that Christ superadded this also, that we must do the contrary, good, and so exceed the Pharisaical measure. They would not wrong a Jew, nor many times relieve him : they reckoned their innocence by not giving offence, by walking blameless, by not being accused before the judges sitting in the gates of their cities. But the balance in which the Judge of quick and dead weighs Christians is, not only the avoiding evil, but doing good ; the ' following peace with all men and holiness ;' the proceeding from faith to faith ; the adding virtue to virtue ; the persevering in all holy conversation and godliness. And therefore St. Paul, commending the grace of universal charity, says, that ' love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law ;'¹ implying, that the prime intention of the law was, that every man's right be secured, that no man receive wrong. And indeed all the Decalogue consisting of prohibitions rather than precepts, saying that each table hath one positive commandment, does not obscurely verify the doctrine of St. Clement's interpretation. Now because the Christian charity abstains from doing all injury, therefore it is the fulfilling of the law ; and because it is also patient and liberal, that it suffers long and is kind, therefore the charity commanded in Christ's law exceeds that charity which the Scribes and Pharisees reckoned as part of their righteousness. But Jesus himself does, with great care in the particulars, instance in what he would have the disciples to be eminent above the most strict sect of the Jewish religion : 1, in practising the moral precepts of the Decalogue

¹ Rom. xiii. 10.

with a stricter interpretation ; 2, and in quitting the permissions and licenses, which for the hardness of their heart Moses gave them, as indulgencies to their persons, and securities against the contempt of too severe laws.

6. The severity of exposition was added but to three commandments, and in three indulgences the permission was taken away. But because our great Lawgiver repeated also other parts of the Decalogue in his after-sermons, I will represent in this one view all that he made to be Christian by adoption.¹

7. The first commandment Christ often repeated and enforced, as being the basis of all religion, and the first endearment of all that relation whereby we are capable of being the sons of God ; as being the great commandment of the law, and comprehensive of all that duty we owe to God in the relations of the virtue of religion. 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord ;' and 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment ;'² that is, this comprehends all that which is moral and eternal in the first table of the Decalogue.

8. The duties of this commandment are, 1, To worship God alone with actions proper to him ; and, 2, to love, and, 3, obey him with all our faculties. 1. Concerning worship. The actions proper to the honour of God, are to offer sacrifice, incense, and oblations, making vows to him, swearing by his name as the instrument of secret testimony, confessing his incommunicable attributes, and praying to him for those graces which are es-

¹ Luke, xviii. 20 ; Mark, x. 19 ; Matt. xix. 18 ; Rom. xiii. 9.

² Matt. xxii. 37 ; Mark, xii. 30 ; Luke, x. 27.

sentially annexed to his dispensation ; as remission of sins, gifts of the Spirit, and the grace of sanctification, and life eternal. Other acts of religion, such as are uncovering the head, bowing the knee, falling upon our face, stooping to the ground, reciting praises, are by the consent of nations used as testimonies of civil or religious veneration, and do not always pass for confessions of a divinity ; and therefore may be without sin used to angels, or kings, or governors, or to persons in any sense more excellent than ourselves, provided they be intended to express an excellency no greater than is proper to their dignities and persons ; not in any sense given to an idol or false gods. But the first sort are such which all the world hath consented to be actions of divine and incommunicable adoration, and such which God also, in several religions, hath reserved as his own appropriate regalities, and are idolatry if given to any angel or man.

9. The next duties are, 2, love, 3, and obedience ; but they are united in the gospel : ‘ This is love, that we keep his commandments.’ And since we are, for God’s sake, bound also to love others, this love is appropriate to God by the extension of parts, and the intention of degrees. The extension signifies that we must serve God with all our faculties ; for all division of parts is hypocrisy, and a direct prevarication ; our heart must think what our tongue speaks, our hands act what we promise or purpose ; and God’s enemies must have no share so much as in appearance or dissimulation. Now no creature can challenge this : and if we do justice to our neighbour, though unwillingly, we have done him no injury ; for in that case he only who sees the irregularity of our

thoughts is the person injured. And when we swear to him, our heart must swear as well as our tongue, and our hands must pay what our lips have promised ; or else we provoke him with an imperfect sacrifice : we love him not with all our mind, with all our strength, and all our faculties.

10. But the difficulty and question of this commandment lies in the intention. For it is not enough to serve God with every capacity, passion, and faculty ; but it must be every degree of every faculty, all the latitude of our will, all the whole intention of our passions, all the possibility and energy of our senses and our understanding. Which, because it is to be understood according to that moderate sentence and account which God requires of us, set in the midst of such a condition, so attended, and depressed, and prejudiced, the full sense of it I shall express in several propositions.

11. First, the intention of the love to which we are obliged requires not the degree which is absolutely the greatest, and simply the most perfect. For there are degrees of grace, every one of which is pleasing to God, and is a state of reconciliation and atonement. And he that ' breaks not the bruised reed,' nor ' quenches the smoking flax,' loves to cherish those endeavours, which, beginning from small principles, pass through the variety of degrees, and give demonstration, that though it be our duty to contend for the best, yet this contention is with an enemy, and that enemy makes an abatement, and that abatement, being an imperfection rather than a sin, is actually consistent with the state of grace, the endeavour being in our power, and not the success : the perfection is that which shall be our reward, and therefore is not our pre-

sent duty. And, indeed, if to do the best action, and to love God as we shall do in heaven, were a present obligation, it would have been clearly taught us what is simply the best action; whereas now that which is of itself better, in certain circumstances, is less perfect, and sometimes not lawful: and concerning those circumstances we have no rules, nor any guide but prudence and probable inducements. So that it is certain, in our best endeavours we should only increase our scruples, instead of doing actions of the highest perfections; we should erect a tyranny over our consciences, and no augmentation of any thing but the trouble. And therefore, in the law of Moses, when this commandment was given in the same words, yet that the sense of it might be clear, the analogy of the law declared that their duty had a latitude; and that God was not so strict a taskmaster, but that he left many instances of piety to the voluntary devotion of his servants, that they might receive the reward of free-will offerings. But if these words had obliged them to the greatest degree, that is, to all the degrees of our capacities in every instance, every act of religion had been duty and necessity.

12. And thus also it was in the gospel. Ananias and Sapphira were killed by sentence from heaven for not performing what was in their power at first not to have promised; but because they brought an obligation upon themselves which God brought not, and then prevaricated, they paid the forfeiture of their lives. St. Paul took no wages of the Corinthian churches,¹ but wrought night and day with his own hand; but himself says he had

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 7, 8.

power to do otherwise. There 'was laid upon him a necessity to preach,' but no necessity to preach without wages and support. There is a good and a better in virginity and marriage; and yet there is no command in either, but that we abstain from sin; we are left to our own election for the particular, having 'no necessity, but power in our will.' David prayed seven times a day, and Daniel prayed three times; and both were beloved of God. The Christian masters were not bound to manumit their slaves, and yet were commended if they did so. Sometimes the Christians fled in persecution; St. Paul did so, and St. Peter did so, and St. Cyprian did so, and St. Athanasius, and many more: but time was, when some of these also chose to suffer death rather than to fly. And if to fly be a permission, and no duty, there is certainly a difference of degrees in the choice: to fly is not so great a suffering as to die, and yet a man may innocently choose the easier. And our blessed Lord himself, who never failed of any degree of his obligations, yet at some time prayed with more zeal and fervour than at other times, as a little before his passion. Since then at all times he did not do actions of that degree which is absolutely the greatest; it is evident that God's goodness is so great, as to be content with such a love which parts no share between him and sin; and leaves all the rest under such a liberty, as is only encouraged by those extraordinary rewards and crowns proportioned to heroicall endeavours. It was a pretty question which was moved in the solitudes of Nitria, concerning two religious brothers: the one gave all his goods to the

poor at once; the other kept the inheritance, and gave all the revenue.¹ None of all the fathers knew which was absolutely the better—at once to renounce all, or by repetition of charitable acts to divide it into portions; one act of charity in an heroic degree, or an habitual charity in the degree of virtue. This instance is probation enough, that the opinion of such a necessity of doing the best action simply and indefinitely is impossible to be safely acted, because it is impossible to be understood. Two talents shall be rewarded, and so shall five; both in their proportions: ‘He that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly,’ but he shall reap: ‘Every man as he purposes in his heart, so let him give.’ The best action shall have the best reward: and though he is the happiest who rises highest, yet he is not safest that enters into the state of disproportion to his person. I find in the lives of the later reputed saints that St. Teresa a Jesu made a vow to do every thing which she should judge to be the best. I will not judge the person, nor censure the action, because possibly her intention and desires were of greatest sanctity; but whosoever considers the story of her life, and the strange repugnancies in the life of man to such undertakings, must needs fear to imitate an action of such danger and singularity. The advice which in this case is safest to be followed, is, that we employ our greatest industry that we fall not into sin and actions of forbidden nature; and then strive, by parts and steps, and with much wariness in attempering our zeal, to superadd degrees of eminency, and observation of the more perfect instances of sanctity: that doing some excellencies which God hath not commanded,

¹ Hist. r. Lausia.

he may be the rather moved to pardon our prevaricating so many parts of our necessary duty. love transport us, and carry us to actions sublim and heroical, let us follow so good a guide, and pass on with diligence, and zeal, and prudence, far as love will carry us: but let us not be carried to actions of great eminence and strictness at unequal severities by scruple and pretence of duty lest we charge our miscarriages upon God, and cast the yoke of the gospel insupportable, and Christ hard task-master. But we shall pass from virtue to virtue with more safety, if a spiritual guide take us by the hand; only remembering, that if the angels themselves and the beatified souls do now, and shall hereafter, differ in degrees of love and glory, it is impossible the state of perfection should be confined to the highest love, and the greatest degree, as such as admits no variety, no increment, or difference of parts and stations.

13. Secondly, Our love to God consists not in any one determinate degree, but hath such a latitude as best agrees with the condition of men, who are of variable natures, different affections and capacities, changeable abilities, and which receive their heightenings and declensions according to thousand accidents of mortality. For when a law is regularly prescribed to persons whose varieties and different constitutions cannot be regular and uniform, it is certain God gives a great latitude of performance, and binds not to just atoms and points. The laws of God are like universal objects received into the faculty, partly by choice, partly by nature; but the variety of perfection is by the variety of the instruments, and disposition to the recipient; and they are excelled by each other in several senses, and by themselves at several times.

And so is the practice of our obedience, and the entertainments of the divine commandments. For some are of malleable natures, others are morose; some are of healthful and temperate constitutions, others are lustful, full of fancy, full of appetite; some have excellent leisure and opportunities of retirement, others are busy in an active life, and cannot with advantage attend to the choice of the better part; some are peaceable and timorous, and some are in all instances serene, others are of tumultuous and unquiet spirits: and these become opportunities of temptation on one side, and on the other occasions of virtue. But every change of faculty and variety of circumstance hath influence upon morality: and therefore their duties are personally altered, and increase in obligation, or are slackened by necessities, according to the infinite alteration of exterior accidents and interior possibilities.

14. Thirdly, Our love to God must be totally exclusive of any affection to sin, and engage us upon a great, assiduous and laborious care to resist all temptations, to subdue sin, to acquire the habits of virtues, and live holily; as it is already expressed in the discourse of repentance. We must prefer God as the object of our hopes, we must choose to obey him rather than man, to please him rather than satisfy ourselves; and we must do violence to our strongest passions when they once contest against a divine commandment. If our passions are thus regulated, let them be fixed upon any lawful object whatsoever; if at the same time we prefer heaven and heavenly things, that is, would rather choose to lose our temporal love than our *eternal hopes*, (which we can best discern by our

refusing to sin upon the solicitation or engagement of the temporal object,) then, although we feel the transportation of a sensual love towards a wife, or child, or friend, actually more pungent and sensible than passions of religion are, they are less perfect, but they are not criminal. Our love to God requires that we do his commandments, and that we do not sin : but in other things we are permitted, in the condition of our nature, to be more sensitively moved by visible than by invisible and spiritual objects. Only this, we must ever have a disposition and a mind prepared to quit our sensitive and pleasant objects, rather than quit a grace or commit a sin. Every act of sin is against the love of God, and every man does many single actions of hostility and provocation against him : but the state of the love of God is that which we actually call the state of grace. When Christ reigns in us, and sin does not reign, but the spirit is quickened, and the lusts are mortified ; when we are habitually virtuous, and do acts of piety, temperance, and justice, frequently, easily, cheerfully, and with a successive, constant, moral and human industry, according to the talent which God hath entrusted to us in the banks of nature and grace ; then we are in the love of God, then we ‘ love him with all our heart.’ But if sin grows upon us, and is committed more frequently, or gets a victory with less difficulty, or is obeyed more readily, or entertained with a freer complacency, then we love not God as he requires, we divide between him and sin, and God is not the Lord of all our faculties. But the instances of Scripture are the best exposition of this commandment : ‘ for David followed God with all his heart, to do that which was right in his

eyes;’ and ‘Josiah turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might.’¹ Both these kings did it: and yet there was some imperfection in David, and more violent recessions: for so saith the Scripture of Josiah, ‘Like unto him was there no king before him;’ David was not so exact as he, and yet he followed God ‘with all his heart,’ From which these two corollaries are certainly deducible: That to love God with all our heart admits variety of degrees, and the lower degree is yet a love with all our heart; and yet to love God requires a holy life, a diligent walking in the commandments, either according to the sense of innocence or of penitents, either by first or second counsels, by the spirit of regeneration or the spirit of renovation and restitution. The sum is this, the sense of this precept is such as may be reconciled with the infirmities of our nature, but not with a vice in our manners; with the recession of single acts seldom done, and always disputed against, and long fought with, but not with an habitual aversion, or a ready obedience to sin, or an easy victory.

15. This commandment, being the sum of the first table, had in Moses’s law particular instances which Christ did not insert into his institution; and he added no other particular, but that which we call the third commandment concerning veneration and reverence to the name of God. The other two, viz., concerning images and the sabbath, have some special considerations.

16. The Jews receive daily offence against the catechisms of some churches, who, in the recitation

¹ *1 Kings*, xiv. 8; *2 Kings*, xxiii. 25.

of the Decalogue, omit the second commandment, as supposing it to be a part of the first, according as we account them ;¹ and their offence rises higher, because they observe that in the New Testament, where the Decalogue is six times repeated in special recitation and in summaries, there is no word prohibiting the making, retaining, or respect of images. Concerning which things Christians consider, that God forbade the Jews the very having and making images and representments, not only of the true God, or of false and imaginary deities, but of visible creatures :² which, because it was but of temporary reason, and relative consideration of their aptness to superstition, and their conversing with idolatrous nations, was a command proper to the nation, part of their covenant; not of essential, indispensable, and eternal reason, not of that which we usually call the law of nature. Of which also God gave testimony, because himself commanded the signs and representment of seraphim to be set upon the mercy-seat, towards which the priest and the people made their addresses in their religious adorations; and of the brazen serpent, to which they looked when they called to God for help against the sting of the venomous snakes. These instances tell us, that to make pictures or statues of creatures is not

¹ Vide Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deut. iv. 16; vii. 5; Numbers, xxxiii. 52.

² *Imò et ecclesia 8 Novemb. celebrat Martyrium Claudii Nicostrati et sociorum, qui, cùm peritissimi fuerant statuarii, mortem potius ferre, quàm Gentilibus simulachra facere, maluerunt.* "Αγαλμα ἐκατεσκεύασε, διὰ τὸ μὴ νομιζεῖν ἀνθρωπόμορφον εἶναι τὸν Θεόν, dixit Diodor. Sic. de Moyse.—"The church celebrates, on the 8th of November, the martyrdom of Claudius Nicostratus and his companions, who, being most excellent sculptors, preferred death to making images for the Gentiles. Diod. Sicul. says, that Moses would allow no images for fear it might be supposed that God was in the form of man."

against a natural reason, and that they may have uses which are profitable, as well as be abused to danger and superstition. Now although the nature of that people was apt to the abuse, and their intercourse with the nations in their confines was too great an invitation to entertain the danger; yet Christianity hath so far removed that danger by the analogy and design of the religion, by clear doctrines, revelations, and infinite treasures of wisdom, and demonstrations of the Spirit, that our blessed Lawgiver thought it not necessary to remove us from superstition by a prohibition of the use of images and pictures; and therefore left us to the sense of the great commandment, and the dictates of right reason, to take care that we do not dishonour the invisible God with visible representations of what we never saw nor can understand, nor yet convey any of God's incommunicable worship in the fore-named instances to any thing but himself. And for the matter of images we have no other rule left us in the New Testament: the rules of reason and nature, and the other parts of the institution, are abundantly sufficient for our security. And possibly St. Paul might relate to this, when he affirmed concerning the fifth, that it was 'the first commandment with promise.' For in the second commandment to the Jews, as there was a great threatening, so also a greater promise, of 'showing mercy to a thousand generations.' But because the body of this commandment was not transcribed into the Christian law, the first of the Decalogue which we retain, and in which a promise is inserted, is the fifth commandment. And therefore the wisdom of the church was remarkable in the variety of sentences concerning the

permission of images. At first, when they were blended in the danger and impure mixtures of Gentilism, and men were newly recovered from the snare, and had the relics of a long custom to superstitious and false worshippings, they endured no images, but merely civil. But as the danger ceased, and Christianity prevailed, they found that pictures had a natural use of good concernment, to move less knowing people, by the representment and declaration of a story: and then they, knowing themselves permitted to the liberties of Christianity, and the restraints of nature and reason, and not being still weak, under prejudice and childish dangers, but fortified by the excellency of a wise religion, took them into lawful uses, doing honour to saints as unto the absent emperors, according to the custom of the empire; they erected statues to their honour, and transcribed a history, and sometimes a precept, into a table, by figures, making more lasting impressions than words and sentences. While the church stood within these limits, she had natural reason for her warrant, and the custom of the several countries, and no precept of Christ to countermand it: they who went further were unreasonable, and according to the degree of that excess were superstitious.

17. The duties of this commandment are learned by the intents of it. For it was directed against the false religion of the nations, who believed the images of their gods to be filled with the deity: and it was also a caution to prevent our low imaginations of God, lest we should come to think God to be like man. And thus far there was indispensable and eternal reason in the precept: and this was never lessened in any thing by the holy

s, and obliges us Christians to make our addresses and worshippings to no god but the God of Christians; that is, of all the world; and not to this in or before an image of him, because he cannot be represented: for the images of Christ and his saints, they come not into either of the two considerations; and we are to understand our duty by the proportions of our reverence to God, expressed in the great commandment. Our fathers in Christianity, as I observed now, made no scruple using the images and pictures of their princes and learned men; which the Jews understood to be forbidden to them in the commandment. Then they admitted even in the utensils of the church: coelatures and engravings: such was that Terentian speaks of, "the good shepherd in the chalice." Afterwards they admitted pictures, but not before the time of Constantine; for in the council of Eliebeth they were forbidden. And in succession of time the scruples lessened with the danger, and all the way they signified their belief to be, that this commandment was only so far retained by Christ, as it relied upon natural reason, or was a particular instance of the great commandment: that is, images were forbidden where they did dishonour Christ, or lessen his reputation, or estrange our duties, become idols, or the direct matter of superstitious observances, charms, or senseless confidences; they were permitted to represent the humanity of Christ, to remember saints and martyrs, to relate a story, to imprint a memory, to do honour to the reputation of absent persons, and to be the instruments of a relative civility and esteem. But in particular, infinite care is to be taken of scandal and danger, of a forward and zealous ignorance, or

of a mistaking and peevish confidence: and where a society hath such persons in it, the little good of images must not be violently retained with the greater danger and certain offence of such persons, of whom consideration is to be had in the cure of souls. I only add this, that the first Christians made no scruple of saluting the statues of their princes, and were confident it made no intrenchment upon the natural prohibition contained in this commandment; because they had observed, that exterior inclinations and addresses of the body, though in the lowest manner, were not proper to God, but in Scripture found also to be communicated to creatures, to kings, to prophets, to parents, to religious persons;¹ and because they found it to be death to do affront to the pictures and statues of their emperors, they concluded in reason, (which they also saw verified by the practice and opinion of all the world,) that the respect they did at the emperor's statue was accepted as a veneration to his person. But these things are but sparingly to be drawn into religion, because the customs of this world are altered, and their opinions new; and many, who have not weak understandings, have weak consciences: and the necessity for the entertainment of them is not so great as the offence is or may be.

18. III. Com. 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.' This our blessed Saviour repeating expresses it thus: 'It hath been said to them of old time, 'Thou shalt not forswear thyself;' to which Christ adds, out of Numb. xxx. 2, 'But thou shalt perform thy oaths unto the

¹ Gen. xlviii. 12; xxiii. 12; xxvii. 29; xlii. 6; 1 Sam. xx. 41; 1 Kings, i. 46.

Lord.' The meaning of the one we are taught by the other. We must not invoke the name of God in any promise in vain ; that is, with a lie : which happens either out of levity, that we change our purpose, which at first we really intended ; or when our intention at that instant was fallacious, and contradictory to the undertaking. This is to take the name of God,—that is, to use it, to take it into our mouths,—for vanity ; that is, according to the perpetual style of Scripture, for a lie. ' Every one hath spoken vanity to his neighbour ;' that is, hath lied unto him ; for so it follows, ' with flattering lips, and with a double heart.'¹ And ' swearing deceitfully,' is, by the Psalmist, called ' a lifting up his soul unto vanity.'² And Philo the Jew, who well understood the law and the language of his nation, renders the sense of this commandment to be, "to call God to witness to a lie." And this is to be understood only in promises ; for so Christ explains it by the appendix out of the law, 'thou shalt perform thy oaths.' For lying in judgment, which is also with an oath, or taking God's name for witness, is forbidden in the ninth commandment. To this Christ added a further restraint : for whereas, by the natural law, it was not unlawful to swear by any oath that implied not idolatry, or the belief of a false god ; I say, any grave and prudent oath, when they spake a grave truth ; and whereas, it was lawful for the Jews in ordinary intercourse to swear by God, so they did not swear to a lie, (to which, also, swearing to an impertinency might be reduced, by a proportion of reason, and was so accounted of in

¹ *Psalm xii. 2.*² *Psalm xxiv. 4.*

the practice of the Jews;) but else, and in other cases, they used to swear by God, or by a creature respectively: (for, 'they that swear by him shall be commended,' saith the Psalmist: and swearing to the Lord of Hosts, is called 'speaking the language of Canaan:') most of this was rescinded; Christ forbade all swearing; not only swearing to a lie, but also swearing to a truth in common affairs; not only swearing commonly by the name of God, but swearing commonly by heaven and by the earth, by our head, or by any other oath: only let our speech be yea, or nay; that is, plainly affirming or denying. In these, I say, Christ corrected the licence and vanities of the Jews and Gentiles. For the Jews accounted it religion to name God, and therefore would not swear by him but in the more solemn occasions of their life; but in trifles they would swear by their fathers, or the light of heaven, or the ground they trod on: so the Greeks were also careful not to swear by the gods lightly, much less fallaciously; but they would swear by any thing about them or near them, upon an occasion as vain as their oath. But, because these oaths are either indirectly to be referred to God, (and Christ instances in divers,) or else they are but a vain testimony, or else they gave a divine honour to a creature, by making it a judge of truth and discerner of spirits; therefore Christ seems to forbid all forms of swearing whatsoever. In pursuance of which law, Basilides, being converted at the prayers of Potamiana, a virgin-martyr, and required by his fellow-soldiers to swear upon some occasion then happening, an-

¹ Psalm lxxiii. 11; 1 Sam. xx. 17; Isaiah, xix. 18.

swered, it was not lawful for him to swear, for he was a Christian. And many of the fathers have followed the words of Christ in so severe a sense, that their words seem to admit no exception.

19. But here a grain of salt must be taken, lest the letter destroy the spirit. 1. It is certain the holy Jesus forbade a custom of swearing; it being great irreligion to despise and lessen the name of God, which is the instrument and conveyance of our adorations to him, by making it common and applicable to trifles and ordinary accidents of our life.¹ He that swears often, many times swears false; and, however, lays by that reverence which, being due to God, the Scripture determines to be due to his name: his name is to be loved and feared. And therefore Christ commands that our communication be yea, yea, or nay, nay; that is, our ordinary discourses should be simply affirmative or negative. In order to this, Plutarch affirms, out of Phavorinus, that the reason why the Greeks forbade children who were about to swear by Hercules, to swear within doors, was, that by this delay and preparation they might be taught not to be hasty or quick in swearing; but all such invocations should be restrained and retarded by ceremony: and Hercules himself was observed never to have sworn in all his life-time but once. 2. Not only customary swearing is forbidden, but all swearing upon a slight cause. St. Basil upbraids some Christians,

¹ Vide Ecclus. xxiii. 9, 11, 13. Dominus et Jacobus ideo prohibuerunt jusjurandum, non ut illud prorsus è rebus humanis tollerent, sed quia caveremus à perjurio, non facile jurando. S. August. ser. 28. de verbis Apost.—“Our Lord and James so prohibited swearing, not that it might be altogether disused in human affairs, but that we might be prevented from committing perjury, by swearing too readily.”

his contemporaries, with the example of Clineas the Pythagorean, who, rather than he would swear, suffered a mulct of three talents. And all the followers of Pythagoras admitted no oath, unless the matter were grave, necessary, and charitable: and the wisest and gravest persons among the heathens were very severe in their counsels concerning oaths.

3. But there are some cases in which the interests of kingdoms and bodies politic, peace, and confederacies, require the sanction of promissory oaths: and they whom we are bound to obey, and who may kill us if we do not, require that their interests be secured by an oath. And that, in this case, and all that are equal, our blessed Saviour did not forbid oaths, is certain, not only by the example of Christians, but of all the world before and since this prohibition, understanding it to be of the nature of such natural bands and securities, without which commonwealths in some cases are not easily combined, and therefore to be a thing necessary, and therefore not to be forbidden. Now, what is by Christians to be esteemed a slight cause, we may determine by the account we take of other things. The glory of God is certainly no light matter; and therefore, when that is evidently and certainly concerned, not phantastically and by vain and imaginary consequences, but by prudent and true estimation, then we may lawfully swear. We have St. Paul's example, who well understood the precept of his Master, and is not to be supposed easily to have done any violence to it; but yet we find religious affirmations, and God invoked for witness as a record upon his soul, in his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians.¹ But

¹ Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. i. 20.

these oaths were only assertory. Tertullian affirmeth, that Christians refused to swear by the genius of their prince, because it was a *dæmon*; but they swore by his health, and their solemn oath was by God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the majesty of the emperor. The fathers of the Ephesine council made Nestorius and Victor swear; and the bishops at Chalcedon swore by the health of their princes. But as St. Paul did it extrajudicially, when the glory of God was concerned in it and the interests of souls; so the Christians used to swear in a cause of piety and religion, in obedience, and upon public command, or for the ends of charity and justice, both with oaths promissory and assertory, as the matter required: with this only difference, that they never did swear in the causes of justice or charity, but when they were before a magistrate; but if it were in a cause of religion, and in matters of promise, they did indeed swear among themselves, but always to or in communities and societies, obliging themselves by oath not to commit wickedness, robberies, sacrilege, not to deceive their trust, not to detain the pledge; which rather was an act of direct intercourse with God, than a solemn or religious obligation to man. Which very thing Pliny also reports of the Christians.

20. The sum is this: since the whole subject matter of this precept is oaths promissory, or vows; all promises with oaths are regularly forbidden to Christians, unless they be made to God or God's vicegerent, in a matter not trifling: ¹ for, in the first

¹ Τὸ Ναι ἐστὶ τὸ Οὐ συλλαβαὶ δύο· ἀλλ' ὅμως τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡ ἀλήθεια, ἐν ᾗ ὁ ἔσχατος ὅρος τῆς πονηρίας, τὸ ψεῦδος, τοῖς μικροῖς τέτοις ῥήμασι πολλάκις ἐμπεριέχεται. S. Basil. lib. de Spir. Sanct.

case, a promise made to God, and a swe God to perform the promise, to him is all the name of God being the instrument ar mination of all our addresses, we cannot posed to speak to God without using of l explicitly or by implication : and therefor promises to God makes a promise, and us name in the promise ; the promise itself the nature of a prayer of solemn invocation In the second case, when the public nec quires it, of which we are not judges, but der authority, we find the lawfulness l bound to believe, or not to contradict the of its necessity.' Only care is to be taker matter be grave or religious. That is, it esteemed and presumed so by us, if the oa posed by our lawful superiors, and to be by them : or else it is so to be provided for selves, when our intercourse is with G vows and promises passed to God ; bein that we do not offer to God goats'-hair fumes of mushrooms, or the blood of swine things either impious or vain. But in our nication, that is, in our ordinary interco men, we must promise by simple testimo religious adjurations, though a creature l strument of the oath.

21. But this forbids not assertory oaths deposing in judgment : for of this Chri not here, it being the proper matter o commandment. And since (as St. Paul ' an oath is the end of all controversy,'*

* *Necessitas, magum humanæ imbecillitatis præsi quid cogit, excusat. Sen.*—"Necessity, the great human imbecility, whatsoever it compels it excuses."

* Heb. vi. 16.

the necessity of commonwealths requires that a period should be fixed to questions, and a rule for the nearest certainty for judgment; whatsoever is necessary is not unlawful: and Christ, who came to knit the bonds of government faster, by the stricture of more religious ties, cannot be understood to have given precepts to dissolve the instruments of judicature and prudent government. But concerning assertory oaths, although they are not forbidden, but supposed in the ninth commandment to be done before our judges in the cause of our neighbour; yet because they are only so supposed, and no way else mentioned by permission or intimation, therefore they are to be estimated by the proportions of this precept concerning promissory oaths. They may be taken in judgment and righteousness, but never lightly, never extrajudicially: only a less cause, so it be judicial, may rather authorize an assertory than a promissory oath; because many cases occur in which peace and justice may be concerned, which without an oath are interminable; but there are but few necessities to confirm a promise by an oath. And therefore the reverence of the name of God ought not to be in-
 enched upon in accidents of little or no necessity. God not having made many necessities in this case, could not, in the matter of promise, give leave to use his name, but when an extraordinary case happens. An oath in promises is of no use for ending questions and giving judicial sentences; and the oath of a Christian and the word of a just person will do most of the work of promises; and it is very much to the disreputation of our religion or ourselves, if we fall into hypocrisy or deceit, or if a Christian asseveration were not of value equal with

an oath. And therefore Christ, forbidding promissory oaths, and commanding so great simplicity of spirit and honesty, did consentantly to the design and perfection of his institution, intending to make us so just and sincere, that our religion being infinite obligation to us, our own promises should pass for bond enough to others, and the religion receive great honour by being esteemed a sufficient security and instrument of public intercourse. And this was intimated by our Lord himself, in that reason he is pleased to give of the prohibition of swearing: 'Let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more cometh of evil.' That is, as good laws come from all manners, the modesty of clothing from the shame of sin, antidotes and physic by occasions of poisons and diseases; so is swearing an effect of distrust, and want of faith or honesty, on one or both sides. Men dare not trust the word of a Christian, or a Christian is not just or punctual to his promises, and this calls for confirmation by an oath: so that oaths suppose a fault, though they are not faults always themselves: whatsoever is more than yea or nay is not always evil; but it always cometh of evil. And therefore the Essenes esteemed every man that was put to his oath no better than an infamous person, a perjurer, or at least suspected—not esteemed a just man. And the heathens would not suffer the priest of Jupiter to swear, because all men had great opinion of his sanctity and authority: and the Egyptians denied Alexander's caution and timorous provision, when he required an oath of them: *Nos religionem in ipsa fide novimus*; our faith

is our bond : and they who are willing to deceive men, will not stick to deceive God, when they have called God to witness.¹ But I have a caution to insert for each, which I propound as an humble advice to persons eminent and publicly interested.

22. First, That princes, and such as have power of decreeing the injunction of promissory oaths, be very curious and reserved, not lightly enjoining such promises, neither in respect of the matter trivial, nor yet frequently, nor without great reason enforcing.² The matter of such promises must be only what is already matter of duty or religion ; for else the matter is not grave enough for the calling of God to testimony : but when it is a matter of duty, then the oath is no other than a vow or promise made to God in the presence of men. And because Christians are otherwise very much obliged to do all which is their duty in matters both civil and religious, of obedience and piety ; therefore it must be an instant necessity, and a great cause to superinduce such a confirmation as derives from the so sacredly invoking the name of God : it must be when there is great necessity that the duty be actually performed, and when the supreme power either hath not power sufficient to punish the delinquent, or may miss to have notice of the delict : for in these cases it is reasonable to bind the faith of the obliged persons by the fear of God after a more special manner ; but else there is no reason sufficient to demand of the subject any fur-

¹ Qui non reverentur homines, fallent Deos. Cicero pro Roscio.—“ They who reverence not men will deceive the gods.”

² Οὐ γὰρ πίστεως τεκμήριον πολυορκία, ἀλλὰ ἀπιστίας ἐστὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐυφρονέσι. Philo. in Decal.—“ Much swearing is not a proof of truth but of falsehood, among evil men.”

ther security than their own faith and contract. The reason of this advice relies upon the strictness of the words of this precept against promissory oaths, and the reverence we owe to the name of God. Oaths of allegiance are fit to be imposed in a troubled state, or to a mutinous people. But it is not so fit to tie the people by oath to abstain from transportations of metal, or grain, or leather, from which by penalties they are, with as much security, and less suspicion of iniquity, restrained.'

23. Secondly, Concerning assertory oaths and depositions in judgment, although a greater liberty may be taken in the subject-matter of the oath, and we may, being required to it, swear in judgment, though the cause be a question of money, or our interest, or the rights of a society; and St. Athanasius purged himself by oath before the emperor Constantius; yet it were a great pursuance and security of this part of Christian religion, if in no case contrary oaths might be admitted, in which it is certain one part is perjured to the ruin of their souls, to the intricating of the judgment, to the dishonour of religion; but that such rules of prudence and reasonable presumption be established, that upon the oath of that party which the law shall choose, and upon probable grounds shall presume for, the sentence may be established. For by a small probability there may a surer judgment be given, than upon the confidence of contradictory oaths: and after the sin the judge is left to the uncertainty of conjectures, as much as if but one part had sworn; and to much more, because such an oath is, by the consent of all men, accepted as a rule to determine in judgment. By these discourses we understand the intention of our blessed

Master in this precept : and I wish, by this or any thing else, men would be restrained from that low, cheap, unreasonable and inexcusable vice of customary swearing, to which we have nothing to invite us that may lessen the iniquity, for which we cannot pretend temptation nor allege infirmity, but it begins by recklessness and a malicious carelessness, and is continued by the strength of habit and the greatest immensity of folly. And I consider that Christian religion, being so holy an institution, to which we are invited by so great promises, in which we are instructed by so clear revelations, and to the performance of our duties compelled by the threatenings of a sad and unprofitable eternity, should more than sufficiently endear the performance of this duty to us. The name of a Christian is a high and potent antidote against all sin, if we consider aright the honour of the name, the undertaking of our covenant, and the reward of our duty. The Jews eat no swine's flesh, because they are of Moses; and the Turks drink no wine, because they are Mahometans; and yet we swear, for all we are Christians; than which there is not in the world a greater conviction of our baseness and irreligion. Is the authority of the holy Jesus so despicable? Are his laws so unreasonable, his rewards so little, his threatenings so small, that we must needs, in contempt of all this, profane the great name of God, and trample under foot the laws of Jesus, and cast away the hopes of heaven, and enter into security to be possessed by hell torments for swearing; that is, for speaking like a fool, without reason, without pleasure, without reputation, much to our disesteem, much to the

trouble of civil and wise persons with whom we join in society and intercourse? Certainly hell will be heated seven times hotter for a customary swearer; and every degree of his unreasonableness will give him a new degree of torment, when he shall find himself in flames for being a stupid, an atheistical, an irreligious fool. This only I desire should be observed, that our blessed Master forbids not only swearing by God, but by any creature; for every oath by a creature does involve and tacitly relate to God. And therefore saith Christ, 'Swear not by heaven, for it is the throne of God;' and he that sweareth by the throne of God, 'sweareth by it, and by him that sitteth thereon.' So that it is not a less matter to swear by a creature than to swear by God; for a creature cannot be the instrument of testimony, but as it is a relative to God; and it, by implication, calls the God of that creature to witness. So that although, in such cases in which it is permitted to swear by God, we may in those cases express our oath in the form of advocating and calling the creature; (as did the primitive Christians, swearing by the health of their emperor, and as Joseph, swearing by the life of Pharaoh, and as Elisha, swearing by the life of Elias, and as did St. Paul, protesting 'by the rejoicing he had in Jesus Christ,'¹ and as we, in our forms of swearing in courts of judicature, touch the gospels, saying, 'So help me God and the contents of this book;' and in a few ages lately past bishops and priests sometimes swore upon the cross, sometimes upon the altar, sometimes by their holy order;) yet we must remember that this, in

¹ 2 Kings, ii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 31.

er words and ceremonies, is but a calling God witness; and he that swears by the cross, swears by the holy crucifix; that is, Jesus crucified for us. And therefore these and the like forms are therefore not to be used in ordinary communion, because they relate to God; they are as obligatory as the immediate invocation of his holiness and majesty: and it was a Judaical vanity to think swearing by creatures was less obliging.¹ They are just with the same restraints made to be as religious as the most solemn invocation of the holy and reverend name of God, lawful or unlawful as to either: unless the swearing by a creature is to be spoiled by some other intervening circumstance; that is, with a denying it to relate to God; for then it becomes superstition as well as idolatry; fanaticism, and it gives to a creature what is due to God: or when the creature is contemptible, or less than the gravity of the matter; as if a man should swear by a fly or the shadow of a tree: when there is an indecorum in the thing, of something that does at too great distance relate to God. For that which with greatest vicinity refers to God in several religions is the best instrument of an oath, and nearest to God's honour; as in Christianity are the holy sacrament, the cross, the altar, and the gospels: and therefore too great a distance may be an indecency next to a disparagement. This only may be added to this consideration, that although an oath, which is properly calling God or God's relative into testimony, is to be understood according to the former discourse; yet there may be great affirmations or negations re-

¹ *Deut.* xxx. 19; *Isa.* i. 2; *Micah*, i. 2.

spectively, and confirmed by forms of vehement asseveration, such as the customs of a nation or consent shall agree upon: and those do in some cases promote our belief or confirm our pretensions better than a plain yea or no; because by such consent the person renders himself infamous if he breaks his word or trust. And although this will not come under the restraint of Christ's words, because they are not properly oaths, but circumstances of earnest affirmation or negation; yet these are human attestations, introduced by custom or consent; and as they come not under the notion of swearing, so they are forms of testimony and collateral engagement of a more strict truth.

24. The Holy Jesus having specified the great commandment of 'loving God with all our heart,' in this one instance of hallowing and keeping his name sacred; that is, from profane and common talk, and less prudent and unnecessary intercourses; instanced in no other commandment of Moses: but having frequent occasion to speak of the sabbath, for ever expresses his own dominion over the day, and that he had dissolved the bands of Moses in this instance; that now we were no more obliged to that rest which the Jews religiously observed by prescript of the law; and by divers acts against securities of the then received practices did desecrate the day, making it a broken yoke, and the first great instance of Christian liberty. And when the apostle gave instructions that 'no man should judge his brother in a holiday, or new moons, or the sabbath-days,' he declared all the Judaical feasts to be obliterated by the sponge which Jesus tasted on the cross; it was within the manuscript of ordinances, and there it was cancelled.

And there was nothing moral in it, but that we do honour to God for the creation, and to that and all other purposes of religion separate and hallow some portion of our time. The primitive church kept both the sabbath and the Lord's-day till the time of the Laodicean council, about three hundred years after Christ's nativity, and almost in every thing made them equal; and therefore did not esteem the Lord's-day to be substituted in the place of the obliterated sabbath, but a feast celebrated by great reason and perpetual consent, without precept or necessary divine injunction. But the liberty of the church was great; they found themselves disobliged from that strict and necessary rest which was one great part of the sabbatic rites, only they were glad of the occasion to meet often for offices of religion, and the day served well for the gaining and facilitating the conversion of the Jews, and for the honourable sepulture of the synagogue, it being kept so long, like the forty days' mourning of Israel for the death of their father Jacob: but their liberty they improved not to license, but as an occasion of more frequent assemblies. And there is something in it for us to imitate, even to sanctify the name of God in the great work of the creation, reading his praises in the book of his creatures, and taking all occasions of religious acts and offices, though in none of the Jewish circumstances.

25. Concerning the observation of the Lord's-day, which now the church observes, and ever did, in remembrance of the resurrection, because it is a day of positive and ecclesiastical institution, it is fit that the church, who instituted the day, should determine the manner of its observation. It was

set apart in honour of the resurrection ; and it were not ill if all churches would, into the weekly offices, put some memorial of that mystery, that the reason of the festival might be remembered with the day, and God thanked with the renewing of the offices. But because religion was the design of the feast, and leisure was necessary for religion, therefore to abstain from suits of law and servile works, but such works as are of necessity and charity, (which to observe are of themselves a very good religion,) is a necessary duty of the day ; and to do acts of public religion is the other part of it. So much is made matter of duty by the intervention of authority. And though the church hath made no more prescriptions in this, and God hath made none at all ; yet he who keeps the day most strictly, most religiously, he keeps it best, and most consonant to the design of the church, and the ends of religion, and the opportunity of the present leisure, and the interests of his soul. The acts of religion proper for the day are prayers and public liturgies, preaching, catechising, acts of charity, visiting sick persons, acts of eucharist to God, of hospitality to our poor neighbours, of friendliness and civility to all, reconciling differences ; and after the public assemblies are dissolved, any act of direct religion to God, or of ease and remission to servants, or whatsoever else is good in manners, or in piety, or in mercy. What is said of this great feast of the Christians, is to be understood to have a greater severity and obligation in the anniversary of the resurrection, of the ascension, of the nativity of our blessed Saviour, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. And all days festival to the honour of God, in remembrance of the holy apostles, and martyrs, and de-

parted saints, as they are with prudence to be chosen and retained by the church, so as not to be unnecessary, or burdensome, or useless ; so they are to be observed by us as instances of our love of the communion of saints, and our thankfulness for the blessing and the example.

26. ' Honour thy father and thy mother.' This commandment Christ made also to be Christian by his frequent repetition and mention of it in his sermons and laws ; and so ordered it, that it should be the band of civil government and society. In the Decalogue God sets this precept immediately after the duties that concern himself, our duty to parents being in the confines with our duty to God ; the parents being in order of nature, next to God, the cause of our being and production, and the great almoners of eternity, conveying to us the essences of reasonable creatures, and the charities of heaven. And when our blessed Saviour, in a sermon to the Pharisees, spake of duty to parents, he rescued it from the impediments of a vain tradition, and secured this duty, though against a pretence of religion towards God, telling us that God would not himself accept a gift which we took from our parents' needs. This duty to parents is the very firmament and band of commonwealths. He that honours his parents will also love his brethren derived from the same loins ; he will dearly account of all his relatives and persons of the same cognation ; and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. And because parents and patriarchs of families and of nations had regal power, they, who by any change succeeded in the care and government of cities and kingdoms, succeeded in the power and authority of fathers, and

teaching of the essence of law and true divinity, to all that he has. So that the duty here commanded is due to all our masters in the sense of Scripture and law, not only to our natural, but to our civil masters, that is, kings and governors. And the duty here is twofold, for they also being instruments of the blessing are the objects of the duty. The duty is twofold, that is, reverence and support, & they shall meet it. And that which our blessed Saviour calls 'not honouring our parents,' in St. Matthew is called in St. Mark, 'doing nothing for them.' And honour is expounded by St. Paul to be maintenance, as well as reverence.* Then we honour our parents, if with great readiness we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sicknesses, and supply their wants, and as much as lies in us, give them support, who gave us being.

33. 'Thou shalt do no murder.'† So it was said to them at that time: 'He that kills shall be guilty of death.' But is, he is to die by the sentence of the law. To this Christ makes an appendix: 'Whoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.' With addition of our blessed Saviour, this commandment, which are severer explications of the law than the Jews admitted, was directed against the vain and carnal opinion of the lawyers, who thought themselves justified by their external works, supposing themselves innocent in matter of blood, and as innocent no more of them than of any other sin, by the custom or silence of the law, and the acquiescence by the judge, was harmless

* Mark, vii. 12. = 1 Tim. v. 17.

† Lev. xxiv. 17; Numb. xxxv. 16, 17.

e God. And this made them to trust in
 etter, to neglect the duties of repentance,
 nit asking pardon for their secret irregu-
 es, and the obliquities and aversations of
 spirits. And this St. Paul also complains
 at neglecting 'the righteousness of God, they
 it to establish their own;' ¹ that is, accord-
 o man's judgment. But our blessed Sa-
 tells them that such an innocence is not
 gh; God requires more than conformity, and
 vation of the fact, and exterior piety; placing
 e, not in legal innocency, or not being con-
 ed in judgment of the law and human judica-
 but in the righteousness of the spirit also; for
 first acquits us before man, but by this we
 be held upright in judgment before the Judge
 the world. And, therefore, besides abstinence
 murder or actual wounds, Christ forbids 'all
 r without cause against our brother;' that is,
 ist any man.

. By which not the first motions are forbidden,
 winklings of the eye, as the philosophers call
 ; the pro-passions and sudden and irresistible
 ations; for it is impossible to prevent them,
 as we could give ourselves a new nature, any
 than we can refuse to wink with our eye when
 lden blow is offered at it, or refuse to yawn
 we see a yawning sleepy person: but by fre-
 t and habitual mortification, and by continual
 hfulness, and standing in readiness against all
 zertences, we shall lessen the inclination, and
 int fewer sudden irreptions. A wise and
 person should not kindle at all, but after

¹ Rom. x. 3.

violent and great collision ; and then, if like a flint he sends a spark out, it must as soon be extinguished as it shows, and cool as soon as sparkle. But, however, the sin is not in the natural disposition ; but when we entertain it, though it be, as Seneca expresses it, *cum voluntate non contumaci*, without a determination of revenge, then it begins to be a sin. Every indignation against the person of the man, in us is pride and self-love, and towards others ungentleness, and an immorigerous spirit. Which is to be understood, when the cause is not sufficient, or when the anger continues longer, or is excessive in the degrees of its proportion.

29. The causes of allowable anger are, when we see God dishonoured, or a sin committed, or any irregularity or fault in matter of government ; a fault against the laws of a family or good manners, disobedience or stubbornness ; which in all instances where they may be prudently judged such by the governor, yet possibly they are not all direct sins against God and religion. In such cases we may be angry. But then we may also sin, if we exceed in time, or measure of degree.

30. The proportion of time St. Paul expresses, by 'not letting the sun set upon our anger.' Leon- tius Patricius was one day extremely and unreasonably angry with John, the patriarch of Alexandria ; at evening the patriarch sent a servant to him with this message, " Sir, the sun is set : " upon which Patricius reflecting, and the grace of God making the impression deep, visible, and permanent, he threw away his anger, and became wholly subject to the counsel and ghostly aids of the patriarch. This limit St. Paul borrowed from the Psalmist :

for that which in the fourth Psalm, verse 4, we read, 'Stand in awe, and sin not,' the Septuagint reads, 'Be angry, but sin not.' And this measure is taken from the analogy of the law of the Jews, that a malefactor should not hang upon the accursed tree after the sun was set. And if the laws laid down their just anger against malefactors as soon as the sun descended, and took off his beams from beholding the example; much more is it reasonable that a private anger which is not warranted by authority, not measured by laws, not examined by solemnities of justice, not made reasonable by considering the degree of the causes, not made charitable by intending the public good, not secured from injuriousness by being disinterested, and such an anger in which the party is judge, and witness, and executioner; it is (I say) but reason such an anger should unyoke and go to bed with the sun, since justice and authority laid by the rods and axes as soon as the sun unteamed his chariot, Plutarch reports, that the Pythagoreans were strict observers of the very letter of this caution: for if anger had boiled up to the height of injury or reproach, before sun-set they would shake hands, salute each other, and depart friends: for they were ashamed that the same anger which had disturbed the counsels of the day, should also trouble the quiet and dreams of the night, lest anger, by mingling with their rest and nightly fancies, should grow natural and habitual. Well, anger must last no longer; but neither may a Christian's anger last so long: for if his anger last a whole day, it will certainly before night sour into a crime. A man's anger is like the spleen; at the first it is natural, but in its excess and distemper it swells into a dia-

ease: and therefore, although to be angry at the presence of certain objects is natural, and therefore is indifferent, because he that is an essential enemy to sin, never made sin essential to a man; yet unless it be also transient, and pass off at the command of reason and religion, it quickly becomes criminal. The meaning is, that it be no more but a transient passion, not permanent at all; but that the anger against the man pass into indignation against the crime, and pity of the person, till the pity grows up into endeavours to help him: for an angry, violent, and disturbed man is like that white bramble of Judæa, of which Josephus reports, that it is set on fire by impetuous winds, and consumes itself, and burns the neighbour-plants. And the evil effects of a violent and passionate anger are so great, so dangerous, so known to all the world, that the very consideration of them is the best argument in the world to dispute against it. Families and kingdoms have suffered horrid calamities; and whatsoever is violent in art or nature hath been made the instrument of sadness in the hands of anger.

31. The measure of the degree is to be estimated by human prudence, that it exceed not the value of the cause, nor the proportion of other circumstances, and that it cause no eruption into indiscretions or indecencies: for therefore Moses's anger, though for God and religion, was reprov'd, because it went forth into a violent and troubled expression, and showed the degree to be inordinate: for it is in this passion as in lightning, which, if it only breaks the cloud, and makes a noise, shows a tempest and disturbance in nature, but the hurt is none; but if it seizes upon a man, or dwells upon a house, or breaks a tree, it becomes a judgment and

a curse. And as the one is a mischief in chance and accident, so the other is in morality and choice: if it passes from passion into action, from a transient violence to a permanent injury, if it abides, it scorches the garment, or burns the body, and there is no way to make it innocent but to remove and extinguish it, and, while it remains, to tie the hands, and pare the nails, and muzzle it, that it may neither scratch, nor bite, nor talk. An anger in God's cause may become unhallowed if it sees the sun rise and set: and an anger in the cause of a man is innocent according to the degrees of its suddenness and discontinuance; for by its quickness and volatile motion it shows that it was, 1, unavoidable in its production; or, 2, that it was harmless in the event; or, 3, quickly suppressed: according to which several cases, anger is either, 1, natural; or, 2, excusable; or, 3, the matter of a virtue.

32. The vulgar Latin Bible, in this precept of our blessed Saviour, reads not the appendix, 'without a cause,' but indefinitely, 'he that is angry with his brother;' and St. Jerome affirms that the clause, 'without a cause,' is not to be found in the true Greek copies. Upon supposition of which, because it is not to be imagined that all anger in all causes, and in all degrees, is simply unlawful, and St. Paul distinguishes being angry from committing a sin, 'be angry, but sin not;' these words are left to signify such an anger as is the crime of homicide in the heart, like the secret lustre called by Christ 'adultery in the heart:' and so here is forbidden, not only the outward act, but the inward inclinations to murder; that is, an anger with deliberation and purpose of revenge; this being explicative and additional to the precept

forbidding murder; which also our blessed Saviour seems to have intended, by threatening the same penalty to this anger or spiritual homicide which the law inflicted upon the actual and external; that is, judgment or condemnation. And because this prohibition of anger is an explication and more severe commentary upon the sixth commandment, it is more than probable that this anger, to which condemnation is threatened, is such an anger as hath entertained something of mischief in the spirit. And this agrees well enough with the former interpretation, save that it affirms no degree of anger to be criminal as to the height of condemnation, unless it be with a thought of violence or desires of revenge; the other degrees receiving their heightenings and declensions as they keep their distance or approach to this. And besides, by not limiting or giving caution concerning the cause, it restrains the malice only, or the degree; but it permits other causes of anger to be innocent besides those spiritual and moral, of the interests of God's glory and religion. But this is also true, whichsoever of the readings be retained; for the irascible faculty having in nature an object proper to its constitution and natural design, if our anger be commenced upon an object naturally troublesome, the anger is very natural, and nowhere said to be irregular. And he who is angry with a servant's unwariness or inadvertency, or the remissness of a child's spirit and application to his studies, or on any sudden displeasure, is not in any sense guilty of prevaricating the sixth commandment, unless besides the object he adds an inequality of degree, or unhandsome circumstance, or adjunct. And possibly it is not in the nature of

to be strict in discipline, if the prohibitions
 anger be confined only to causes of religion :
 it were hard that such an anger, which is inno-
 cent in all effects, and a good instrument of go-
 vernment, should become criminal and damnable,
 because some instances of displeasure are in ac-
 t not certainly and apparently sinful. So that
 the blessed Saviour forbidding us to be ' angry
 without a cause,' means such causes which are not
 irregularities in religion, but defections in
 manners; and an anger may be religious, and po-
 litical, and economical, according as it meets with
 objects proper to it in several kinds. It is some-
 times necessary that a man carry a tempest in his
 breast, and a rod in his hand; but for ever let him
 have a smooth mind, or at least under command,
 within the limits of reason and religion, that
 he may steer securely, and avoid the rocks of sin ;
 when he may reprove a friend that did amiss, or
 chastise an offending son, or correct a vicious
 servant. The sum is this: there are no other
 grounds to hallow or to allow and legitimate anger,
 than that, 1. The cause be religion, or matter of go-
 vernment. 2. That the degree of the anger in pru-
 dence accounts be no bigger than the cause. 3. That
 when it goes forth, it be not expressed in any action of
 uncharitableness, or unseasonable violence. 4.
 Whether it goes forth or abides at home, it must not
 abide long any where; nor abide in the form of a
 burning coal, but, at the most, of a thin flame, thence
 rising into air salutary and gentle, fit to breathe,
 not to blast. There is this only nicety to be
 observed; that although an anger arising for reli-
 gion or in the matter of government, cannot inno-
 cently abide long, yet it may abide till it hath

passed forth into its proper and temperate expression, whether of reprehension or chastisement, and then it must sit down. But if the anger arises from another cause, (provided it be of itself innocent, not sinful in the object or cause,) the passion in its first spring is also innocent, because it is natural, and on the sudden unavoidable: but this must be suppressed within, and is not permitted to express itself at all. For in that degree in which it goes out of the mouth, or through the eyes, or from the hand, in that degree it is violent, ought to be corrected and restrained: for so that passion was intended to be turned into virtue. For this passion is like its natural parent or instrument. And if choler keeps in its proper seat, it is an instrument of digestion; but if it goes forth into the stranger regions of the body, it makes a fever. And this anger which commences upon natural causes, though so far as it is natural it must needs be innocent; yet when any consent of the will comes to it, or that it goes forth in any action or voluntary signification, it also becomes criminal. Such an anger is only permitted to be born and die; but it must never take nourishment, or exercise any act of life.

33. But if that prohibition be indefinite, then it is certain the analogy of the commandment, of which this is an explication, refers it to revenge or malice: it is an anger that is wrath, an anger of revenge or injury, which is here prohibited. And I add this consideration, that since it is certain that Christ intended this for an explication of the prohibition of homicide, the clause of 'without cause' seems less natural and proper. For it would intimate, that though anger of revenge is

forbidden when it is rash and unreasonable; yet that there might be a case of being angry with a purpose of revenge and recompense, and that in such a case it is permitted to them to whom in all other it is denied; that is, to private persons: which is against the meekness and charity of the gospel. More reasonable it is, that as no man might kill his brother in Moses's law by his own private authority; so an anger is here forbidden, such an anger which no qualification can permit to private persons; that is, an anger with purposes of revenge.

34. But Christ adds, that a further degree of this sin is, when our anger breaks out in contumelies and ill language, and receives its increment according to the degree and injury of the reproach. There is a homicide in the tongue as well as in the heart; and he that kills a man's reputation by calumnies, or slander, or open reviling, hath broken this commandment. But this is not to be understood so, but that persons in authority or friends may reprehend a vicious person in language proper to his crime, or expressive of his malice or iniquity. Christ called Herod 'fox:' and although St. Michael brought not a railing accusation against Satan, yet the Scripture calls him an accuser, and Christ calls him the father of lies, and St. Peter, a devourer and a roaring lion; and St. John calls Diotrephes a lover of pre-eminence, or ambitious. But that which is here forbidden, is not a representing the crimes of the man for his emendation, or any other charitable or religious end; but a reviling him to do him mischief, to murder his reputation. Which also shows, that whatever is here forbidden, is in

some sense or other accounted homicide ; the anger in order to reproach, and both in order to murder, subject to the same punishment, because forbidden in the same period of the law : save only that, according to the degrees of the sin, Christ proportions several degrees of punishment in the other world, which he apportions to the degrees of death which had ever been among the Jews ; viz. the sword, and stoning to death, which were punishments legal and judicial ; and the burning infants in the valley of Hinnom, which was a barbarous and superstitious custom used formerly by their fathers, in imitation of the Phœnician accursed rites.

35. The remedies against anger, which are prescribed by masters of spiritual life, are partly taken from rules of prudence, partly from piety and more precise rules of religion. In prudence, 1. Do not easily entertain, or at all encourage, or willingly hear, or promptly believe tale-bearers and reporters of other men's faults : for oftentimes we are set on fire by an *ignis fatuus*, a false flame, and an empty story. 2. Live with peaceable people, if thou canst. 3. Be not inquisitive into the misdemeanours of others, or the reports which are made of you. 4. Find out reasons of excuse to alleviate and lessen the ignorances of a friend, or carelessnesses of a servant. 5. Observe what object is aptest to inflame thee, and by special arts of fortification stop up the avenues to that part : if losses, if contempt, if incivilities, if slander, still make it the greatest part of your employment to subdue the impotency of that passion that is more apt to raise tempests. 6. Extirpate petty curiosities of apparel, lodging, diet, and learn to be indif-

ferent in circumstances ; and if you be apt to be transported with such little things, do some great thing that shall cut off their frequent intervening.

7. Do not multiply secular cares, and troublesome negotiations, which have variety of conversation with several humours of men and accidents of things ; but frame to thyself a life simple as thou canst, and free from all affectations.

8. Sweeten thy temper and allay the violence of thy spirit with some convenient, natural, temperate, and medicinal solaces ; for some dispositions we have seen inflamed into anger, and often assaulted by peevishness, through immoderate fasting and inconvenient austerities.

9. A gentle answer is an excellent remora to the progresses of anger, whether in thyself or others : for anger is like the waves of a troubled sea ; when it is corrected with a soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves nothing behind it but froth and shells, no permanent mischief.

10. Silence is an excellent art : and that was the advice which St. Isaac, an old religious person in the primitive church, is reported to have followed, to suppress his anger within his breast, and use what means he could there to strangle it ; but never permitting it to go forth in language : anger and lust being like fire, which if you enclose, suffering it to have no emission, it perishes and dies ; but give it the smallest vent, and it rages to a consumption of all it reaches. And this advice is coincident with the general rule which is prescribed in all temptations, that anger be suppressed in its cradle and first assaults.

11. Lastly, let every man be careful that in his repentance or in his zeal, or his religion, he be as dispassionate and free from anger as is possible ; lest anger pass

upon him in a reflex act, which was rejected in the direct. Some mortifiers, in their contestation against anger, or any evil or troublesome principle, are like criers of assizes, who calling for silence make the greatest noise ; they are extremely angry when they are fighting against the habit or violent inclinations to anger.

36. But in the way of more strict religion it is advised, 1. That he who would cure his anger should pray often. It is St. Austin's counsel to the bishop Auxilius, that, like the apostles in a storm, we should awake Christ, and call to him for aid, lest we shipwreck in so violent passions and impetuous disturbances. 2. Propound to thyself the example of meek and patient persons : remembering always that there is a family of meek saints, of which Moses is the precedent, a family of patient saints, under the conduct of Job. Every one in the mountain of the Lord shall be gathered to his own tribe, to his own family, in the great day of jubilee : and the angry shall perish with the effects of anger ; and peevish persons shall be vexed with the disquietness of an eternal worm and sting of a vexatious conscience, if they suffer here the transportations and saddest effects of an unmortified, habitual, and prevailing anger. 3. Above all things endeavour to be humble, to think of thyself as thou deservest ; that is, meanly and unworthily : and in reason it is to be presumed thou wilt be more patient of wrong, quiet under affronts and injuries, susceptible of inconveniences, and apt to entertain all adversities, as instruments of humiliation, deleteries of vice, corrections of indecent passions, and instruments of virtue. 4. All the reason, and all the relations, and all the necessities of

mankind are daily arguments against the violences and inordinations of anger. For he that would not have his reason confounded, or his discourse useless, or his family be a den of lions; he that would not have his marriage a daily duel, or his society troublesome, or his friendship formidable, or his feasts bitter; he that delights not to have his discipline cruel, or his government tyrannical, or his disputations violent, or his civilities unmannerly, or his charity be a rudeness, or himself brutish as a bear, or peevish as a fly, or miserable upon every accident, and in all the changes of his life, must mortify his anger. For it concerns us as much as peace, and wisdom, and nobleness, and charity, and felicity are worth, to be at peace in our breasts, and to be pleased with all God's providence, and to be in charity with every thing, and with every man.

37. 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' These two commandments are immediate to each other, and of the greatest cognation: for anger and lust work upon one subject; and the same fervours of blood which make men revengeful, will also make men unchaste. But the prohibition is repeated in the words of the old commandment; so 'it was said to them of old:' which was not only a prohibition of the violation of the rites of marriage, but was, even among the Jews, extended to signify all mixture of sexes not matrimonial. For adultery in Scripture is sometimes used to signify fornication, and fornication for adultery; as it is expressed in the permissions of divorce in the case of fornication: and by Moses's law fornication also was forbidden, and it was hated also and reprov'd in the natural. But it is very probable that this precept

was restrained only to the instance of adultery in the proper sense ; that is, violation of marriage ; for Moses did, in other annexes of the law, forbid fornication. And as a blow or wound was not esteemed in Moses's law a breach of the sixth commandment, so neither was any thing but adultery esteemed a violation of the seventh by very many of their own doctors ; of which I reckon this a sufficient probation, because they permitted stranger virgins and captives to fornicate ; only they believed it sinful in the Hebrew maidens. And when two harlots pleaded before Solomon, for the bastard child, he gave sentence of their question, but nothing of their crime. Strangers with the Hebrews signified many times harlots, because they were permitted to be such, and were entertained to such purposes. But these were the licences of a looser interpretation ; God having to all nations given sufficient testimony of his detestation of all concubinate not hallowed by marriage : of which among the nations there was abundant testimony, in that the harlots were not permitted to abide in the cities, and wore veils in testimony of their shame and habitual indecencies ; which we observe in the story of 'Thamar,' and also in Chrysippus. And although it passed without punishment, yet never without shame, and a note of turpitude. And the abstinence from fornication was one of the precepts of Noah, to which the Jews obliged the stranger-proselytes, who were only proselytes of the house : and the apostles enforced it upon the Gentiles in their first decree at Jerusalem, as re-

1 Gen. xxviii. 14.

newing an old stock of precepts and obligations, in which all the converted and religious Gentiles did communicate with the Jews.

38. To this Christ added, that the eyes must not be adulterous: his disciples must not only abstain from the act of unlawful concubinate, but from the impurer intuition of a wife of another man; so, according to the design of his whole sermon, opposing the righteousness of the spirit to that of the law, or of works, in which the Jews confided. Christians must have chaste desires, not indulging to themselves a liberty of looser thoughts; keeping the threshold of their temples pure, that the Holy Ghost may observe nothing unclean in the entry of his habitation. For he that lusts after a woman, wants nothing to the consummation of the act but some convenient circumstances; which, because they are not in our power, the act is impeded, but nothing of the malice abated. But so severe in this was our blessed Master, that he commanded us rather to put our eyes out, than to suffer them to become an offence to us; that is, an inlet of sin, or an invitation or transmission of impurity: by putting our eyes out, meaning the extinction of all incentives of lust, the rejection of all opportunities and occasions, the quitting all conditions of advantage which ministers fuel to this hell-fire. And by this severity we must understand all beginnings, temptations, likenesses, and insinuations and minutes of lust and impurity to be forbidden to Christians; such as are all morose delectations in vanity, wanton words, gestures, balls, revellings, wanton diet, garish and lascivious dressings and trimmings of the body, looser banquetings; all

'making provisions for the flesh to fulfil the lust of it,' all lust of concupiscence, and all 'lust of the eye,' and all lust of the hand, unclean contacts, are to be rescinded; all lust of the tongue and palate, all surfeiting and drunkenness. For it is impossible to keep the spirit pure, if it be exposed to all the entertainment of enemies. And if Christ forbade the wanton eye, and placed it under the prohibition of adultery, it is certain, whatsoever ministers to that vice, and invites to it, is within the same restraint; it is the eye, or the hand, or the foot that is to be cut off. To this commandment fastings and severe abstinences are apt to be reduced, as being the proper abscission of the instruments and temptations of lust, to which Christ invites by the mixed proposition of threatening and reward; for better it is to go to heaven with but one eye or one foot, that is, with a body half nourished, than with full meals and an active lust to enter into hell. And in this our blessed Lord is a physician rather than a lawgiver; for abstinence from all impure, concubinate, and morose delectations, so much as in thought, being the commandment of God, that Christ bids us retrench the occasions and insinuations of lust; it is a facilitating the duty, not a new severity, but a security and caution of prudence.

39. 'Thou shalt not steal.' To this precept Christ added nothing, because God had already in the Decalogue fortified this precept with a restraint upon the desires; for the tenth commandment forbids all coveting of our neighbour's goods. For the wife there reckoned, and forbidden to be desired from another man, is not a restraint of libidi-

nous appetite, but of the covetous ; it being accounted part of wealth to have a numerous family, many wives, and many servants. And this also God, by the prophet Nathan, upbraided to David, as an instance of David's wealth, and God's liberality. But yet this commandment Christ adopted into his law, it being prohibited by the natural law, or the law of right reason ; commonwealths not being able to subsist without distinction of dominion, nor industry to be encouraged but by propriety, nor families to be maintained but by defence of just rights and truly purchased possessions. And this prohibition extends to all injustice, whether done by force or fraud ; whether it be by ablation, or prevention, or detaining of rights ; any thing in which injury is done directly or obliquely to our neighbour's fortune.

40. 'Thou shalt not bear false witness.' That is, thou shalt not answer in judgment against thy neighbour falsely ; which testimony in the law was given solemnly and by oath, invoking the name of God. 'I adjure thee by God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ,' said the high-priest to the blessed Jesus ; that is, speak upon thy oath : and then he told them fully, though they made it the pretence of murdering him, and he knew they would do so. Confessing and witnessing truth is giving glory to God ; but false witness is high injustice, it is inhumanity and treason against the quietness, or life, or possession of a just person ; it is in itself irregular and unreasonable, and therefore is so forbidden to Christians, not only as it is unjust, but as it is false. For a lie in communication and private converse is also forbidden, as well as unjust testimony. 'Let every man speak

truth with his neighbour ;' that is, in private society. And whether a lie be in jest or earnest, when the purpose is to deceive and abuse, though in the smallest instance, it is in that degree criminal as it is injurious. I find not the same affirmed in every deception of our neighbours, wherein no man is injured, and some are benefited ; the error of the affirmation being nothing but a natural irregularity, nothing malicious, but very charitable. I find no severity superadded by Christ to this commandment, prohibiting such discourse, which, without injury to any man, deceives a man into piety or safety. But this is to be extended no further : in all things else we must be severe in our discourses, ' neither lie in a great matter nor a small, for the custom thereof is not good,' saith the son of Sirach. I could add, concerning this precept, that Christ having left it in that condition he found it in the Decalogue, without any change or alteration of circumstance, we are commanded to give true testimony in judgment ; which because it was under an oath, there lies upon us no prohibition, but a severity of injunction, to swear truth in judgment when we are required. The securing of testimonies was by the sanctity of an oath, and this remains unaltered in Christianity.

41. 'Thou shalt not covet.' This commandment we find nowhere repeated in the gospel by our blessed Saviour ; but it is inserted in the repetition of the second table, which St. Paul mentioned to the Romans. For it was so abundantly expressed in the inclosure of other precepts, and the whole design of Christ's doctrines, that it was less needful specially to express that which is every

¹ Ephes. iv. 25.

where affixed to many precepts evangelical. Particularly it is inherent in the first beatitude, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit:' and it means, that we should not wish our neighbour's goods with a deliberate entertained desire, but that upon the commencement of the motion it be disbanded instantly; for he that does not at the first address and incitement of the passion suppress it, he hath given it that entertainment which, in every period of staying, is a degree of morose delectation in the appetite: and to this I find not Christ added any thing; for the law itself, forbidding to entertain the desire, hath commanded the instant and present suppression: they are the same thing, and cannot reasonably be distinguished. Now that Christ, in the instance of adultery, hath commanded to abstain also from occasions and accesses towards the lust, in this is not the same severity; because the vice of covetousness is not such a wild-fire as lust is, not inflamed by contact and neighbourhood of all things in the world. Every thing may be instrumental to libidinous desires, but to covetous appetites there are not temptations of so different natures.

42. Concerning the order of these commandments, it is not unusefully observed, that, if we account from the first to the last, they are of greatest perfection which are last described; and he who is arrived to that severity and dominion of himself as not to desire his neighbour's goods, is very far from actual injury, and so in proportion; it being the least degree of religion to confess but One God. But, therefore, vices are to take their estimate in the contrary order: he that prevaricates the first commandment is the greatest sinner in the world;

and the least is he that only covets without any actual injustice. And there is no variety or objection in this, unless it be altered by the accidental difference of degrees; but in the kinds of sin the rule is true. This only; the sixth and seventh are otherwise in the Hebrew Bibles than ours, and in the Greek otherwise in Exodus than in Deuteronomy: and by this rule it is a greater sin to commit adultery than to kill; concerning which we have no certainty, save that St. Paul, in one respect, makes the sin of uncleanness the greatest of any sin, whose scene lies in the body; 'every sin is without the body; but he that commits fornication, sins against his own body.'

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, wisdom of thy Father, thou light of Jews and Gentiles, and the great Master of the world, who, by thy holy sermons and clearest revelations of the mysteries of thy Father's kingdom, didst invite all the world to great degrees of justice, purity, and sanctity, instruct us all in a holy institution, give us understanding of thy laws; that the light of thy celestial doctrine illuminating our darknesses, and making bright all the recesses of our spirits and understandings, we may direct our feet, all the lower man, the affections of the inferior appetite, to walk in the paths of thy commandments. Dearest God, make us to live a life of religion and justice, of love and duty; that we may adore thy majesty, and reverence thy name, and love thy mercy, and admire thy infinite glories and perfections, and obey thy precepts. Make us to love thee for thyself, and our neighbours for thee; make us to be all love and all duty; that we may adorn the gospel of thee our Lord, walking worthy of our vocation; that, as thou hast called us to be thy disciples, so we may walk therein, doing the work of faithful servants, and may receive the adoption of sons, and the gift of eternal glory, which thou hast reserved for all the disciples of thy holy institution. Make all the

world obey thee as a prophet ; that, being redeemed and purified by thee, our High-priest, all may reign with thee, our King, in thy eternal kingdom, O eternal Jesus, wisdom of thy Father. Amen.

DISCOURSE XI.

*Of the three additional Precepts which Christ superinduced and made Parts of the Christian Law :—
Of Charity, with its Parts, forgiving, giving, not judging.*

PART I.

Of Forgiveness.

1. THE holy Jesus coming to reconcile all the world to God, would reconcile all the parts of the world one with another, that they may rejoice in their common band and their common salvation. The first instance of charity forbade to Christians all revenge of injuries: which was a perfection and endearment of duty beyond what either most of the old philosophers, or the laws of the nations, or of Moses ever practised or enjoined.¹

¹ Plutarchus tamen multa præclara dicit de charitate erga inimicos. Simplicitati et magnanimitati atque bonitati plus loci hic est quàm in amicitiiis — Oblat occasione ulciscendi inimicum, eum missum facere æquanimitatis est. Qui verò miseratur inimicum afflictum, et opem fert indigenti, et filiis ejus ac familiæ adverso ipsorum tempore operam suam studiûmque defert, hunc qui non amat, huic pectus atrum est atque adamantinum, &c. De cap. ex inim. utilit.

Et Cicero dixit Cæsari; Pompeii statuas restituendo, tuas lexiisti.

Justitiæ primum munus est, ut nè cui noceas, nisi lacessitus injuriâ. Cic. de Offic.

For revenge was esteemed, to unhallowed, unchristian natures, as sweet as life, a satisfaction of injuries, and the only cure of maladies and affronts. Only, laws of the wisest commonwealths commanded that revenge should be taken by the judge: a few cases being excepted, in which, by sentence of the law, the injured person or his nearest relative might be the executioner of the vengeance: as among the Jews, in the case of murder; among the Romans, in the case of an adulteress, or a ravished daughter, the father might kill the adulteress or the ravisher. In other things, the judge only was to be the avenger. But Christ commanded his disciples, rather than take revenge, to expose themselves to a second injury; rather offer the other cheek, than be avenged for a blow on this: 'for vengeance belongs to God,'¹ and he will retaliate. And 'to that wrath we must give place,' saith St. Paul; that is, in well-doing and evil-suffering, commit ourselves to his righteous judgment, leaving room for his execution, who will certainly do it, if we snatch not the sword from his arm.

2. But some observe, that our blessed Saviour instanced but in smaller injuries. He that bade us suffer a blow on the cheek, did not oblige us tamely to be sacrificed: he that enjoined us to put up the loss of our coat and cloak, did not signify his pleasure to be, that we should offer our family to be turned out of doors, and our whole estate aliened and cancelled; especially we being other-

Exod. xxi. 23; Levit. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21.

Idcirco judiciorum vigor, jurisque publici tutela videtur in medio constituta, nè quisquam sibi ipsi permittere valeat ultionem. Honor. et Theod. in Cod. Theodos.

¹ Rom. xii. 19.

wise obliged to provide for them, under the pain of the curse of infidelity. And indeed there is much reason our defences may be extended, when the injuries are too great for our sufferance; or that our defence bring no greater damage to the other than we divert from ourselves. But our blessed Saviour's prohibition is instanced in such small particulars, which are no limitations of the general precept, but particulars of common consideration. 'But I say unto you, resist not evil;' so our English Testament reads it: but the word signifies, 'avenge not evil;'¹ and it binds us to this only, that we be not avengers of the wrong, but rather suffer twice, than once to be avenged. He that is struck on the face may run away, or may divert the blow, or bind the hand of his enemy; and he whose coat is snatched away may take it again, if without injury to the other he may do it. We are sometimes bound to resist evil: every clearing of our innocence, refuting of calumnies, quitting ourselves of reproach, is a resisting evil; but such which is hallowed to us by the example of our Lord himself and his apostles. But this precept is clearly expounded by St. Paul, 'Render not evil for evil;'² that is, be not revenged. You may either secure or restore yourselves to the condition of your own possessions or fame, or preserve your life, provided that no evil be returned to him that offers the injury. For so sacred are the laws of Christ, so holy and great is his example, so much hath he endeared us who were his enemies, and so frequently and

¹ Μη ἀντιτεῖναι τῷ πονηρῷ sumitur sensu generali pro omni retaliationē.

² Rom. xii. 17.

severely hath he preached and enjoined forgiveness, that he who knows not to forgive, knows not to be like a Christian, and a disciple of so gentle a master.

3. So that the smallness or greatness of the instance alters not the case in this duty: in the greatest matters we are permitted only to an innocent defence; in the smallest we may do so too. I may as well hold my coat fast as my gold, and I may as well hide my goods as run away; and that is a defence. And if my life be in danger, I must do no more but defend myself. Save only that defence in case of life is of a larger signification than in case of goods. I may wound my enemy, if I cannot else be safe; I may disarm him, or in any sense disable him; and this is extended even to a liberty to kill him, if my defence necessarily stands upon so hard conditions. For although I must not give him a wound for a wound, because that cannot cure me, but is certainly revenge; yet when my life cannot be otherwise safe than by killing him, I have used that liberty which nature hath permitted me, and Christ hath not forbidden, who only interdicted revenge, and forbade no defence which is charitable and necessary, and not blended with malice and anger. And it is as much charity to preserve myself as him, when I fear to die.

4. But although we find this nowhere forbidden, yet it is very consonant to the excellent mercy of the gospel, and greatly laudable, if we choose rather to lose our life, in imitation of Christ, than save it by the loss of another's, in pursuance of the permissions of nature. When nature only gives leave, and no lawgiver gives command to defend

our lives, and the excellence of Christianity highly commends dying for our enemies, and propounds to our imitation the greatest example that ever could be in the world ; it is a very great imperfection, if we choose not rather to obey an insinuation of the holy Jesus, than with greediness and appetite pursue the bare permissions of nature. But in this we have no necessity. Only this is to be read with two cautions : 1. So long as the assaulted person is in actual danger, he must use all arts and subterfuges which his wit or danger can supply him with ; as passive defence, flight, arts of diversion, entreaties, soft and gentle answers, or whatsoever is in its kind innocent, to prevent his sin and my danger ; that when he is forced to his last defence, it may be certain he had nothing of revenge mingled in so sad a remedy. 2. That this be not understood to be a permission to defend our lives against an angry and unjust prince. For if my lawful prince should attempt my life with rage, or with the abused solemnities of law ; in the first case the sacredness of his person ; in the second, the reverence and religion of authority, are his defensatives, and immure him, and bind my hands, that I must not lift them up, but to heaven, for my own defence and his pardon.

5. But the vain pretences of vainer persons have here made a question where there is no scruple : and if I may defend my life with the sword, or with any thing which nature and the laws forbid not, why not also mine honour, which is as dear as life, which makes my life without contempt, useful to my friend, and comfortable to myself ? For to be reputed a coward, a baffled person, and one that will take affronts, is to be miserable and scorned,

and to invite all insolent persons to do me injuries. May I not be permitted to fight for mine honour, and to wipe off the stains of my reputation? Honour is as dear as life, and sometimes dearer. To this I have many things to say. For that which men in this question call honour, is nothing but a reputation amongst persons vain, unchristian in their deportment, empty and ignorant souls, who count that the standard of honour which is the instrument of reprobation; as if to be a gentleman were to be no Christian. They that have built their reputation upon such societies, must take new estimates of it, according as the wine, or fancy, or custom, or some great fighting person shall determine it; and whatsoever invites a quarrel, is a rule of honour. But then it is a sad consideration to remember, that it is accounted honour not to recede from any thing we have said or done. It is honour not to take the lie; in the meantime it is not dishonourable to lie indeed, but to be told so: and not to kill him that says it, and venture my life and his too, that is a forfeiture of reputation. A mistress's favour, an idle discourse, a jest, a jealousy, a health, a gaiety, any thing must engage two lives in hazard, and two souls in ruin; or else they are dishonoured. As if a life, which is so dear to a man's self, which ought to be dear to others, which all laws and wise princes and states have secured by the circumvallation of laws and penalties, which nothing but heaven can recompense for the loss of, which is the breath of God, which to preserve Christ died, the Son of God died, as if this were so contemptible a thing, that it must be ventured for satisfaction of a vicious person, or a vain custom, or such a folly which a

wise and a severe person had rather die than be guilty of. Honour is from him that honours. Now certainly God and the king are the fountains of honour: right reason and religion, the Scripture and the laws, are the best rules of estimating honour. And if we offer to account our honours by the senseless and illiterate discourses of vain and vicious persons, our honour can be no greater than the fountain from whence it is derivative: and at this rate Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool, might have declared Thersites an honourable person; and every bold gladiator in a Roman theatre, or a fighting rebel among the slaves of Sparta, or a trooper of Spartacus's guard, might have stood upon their honour upon equal and as fair a challenge. Certainly there is no greater honour than to be like the holy Jesus, and he is delectable in the eyes of God, and so are all his relatives and followers, by participation of his honour; and nothing can be more honourable than to do wise and excellent actions, according to the account of divine and human laws; and if either God or the king can derive honour upon their subjects, then whatsoever is contrary to that which they honour, must needs be base, dishonourable, and inglorious.

6. But if we be troubled for fear of new and succeeding injuries, and will needs fight, and as much as lies in us kill our brother to prevent an injury; nothing can be more unworthy of a Christian, nothing can be more inhuman. Cato, pleading in the Roman senate in the behalf of the Rhodian ambassadors, who came to beg peace of the commonwealth, which had entertained an anger and some thoughts of war against them, upon pretence *that the Rhodians would war with them*

when they durst, discoursed severely and prudently against such unreasonable purposes. And the life of men and the interest of states is not like the trade of fencers, whose lot is to conquer if they strike first, to die if they be prevented. Man's life is not established upon so unequal and unreasonable necessities, that either we must first do an injury, or else it is certain we must receive a mischief. God's providence and care in his government of the world is more vigilant and merciful, and he protects persons innocent and just in all cases: except when he means to make an injury the instrument of a grace, or a violent death to be the gate of glory. It was not ill answered of Merope to king Polyphontes, who therefore killed his brother, because he had entertained a purpose to have killed him: "You should only have done the same injury to him which he did to you; you should still have had a purpose to kill him:" for his injustice went no further; and it is hard to requite ill and uncertain purposes with actual murder, especially when we are as much secured by the power of laws, as the whole commonwealth is in all its greatest interests. And therefore for Christians to kill a man to prevent being baffled or despised, is to use an extreme desperate remedy, infinitely painful and deadly; to prevent a little griping in the belly, foreseen as possible to happen, it may be, three years after. But besides, this objection supposes a disease almost as earnestly to be cured as this of the main question; for it represents a man keeping company with lewd and debauched persons, spending his time in vanity, drunken societies, or engaged in lust, or placing his scene amongst persons apt to do affronts and unworthy

misdemeanors: and indeed an affront, an injury, a blow, or a loud disgrace is not the consequence of not fighting, but a punishment for engaging in loose, baser, and vicious company. If the gallants of the age would find an honest and a noble employment, or would be delicate in the choice of their friends and company, or would be severe in taking accounts of themselves and of their time, would live as becomes persons wise and innocent, that is like Christians, they would soon perceive themselves removed far from injuries, and yet further from trouble, when such levities of mischance or folly should intervene. But suppose a man affronted or disgraced, it is considerable whether the man deserve it or no; if he did, let him entertain it for his punishment, and use it for an instrument of correction and humility: if he did not, as an instance of fortitude, and despite of lower things. But to venture lives to abolish a past act, is madness, unless in both those lives there was not good enough to be esteemed greater and of better value, than the light affront had in it of misery and trouble. Certainly those persons are very unfortunate, in whose lives much more pleasure is not, than there is mischief in a light blow or a lighter affront, from a vain or an angry person. But suppose there were not, yet how can fighting or killing my adversary wipe off my aspersion, or take off my blow, or prove that I did not lie? For it is but an ill argument to say, If I dare kill him, then I did not lie; or, If I dare fight, then he struck me not; or, If I dare venture damnation, then I am an honourable person. And yet further, who gave me power over my own life, or over the life of another, that I shall venture my own, and offer to take his?

God and God's vicegerent only are the lords of lives : who made us judges, and princes, or gods ? And if we be not such, we are murderers and villains. When Moses would have parted the duellists that fought in Egypt, the injurious person asked him, ' Who made thee a judge or ruler over us ? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday ?' meaning, he had no power to kill, none to judge of life and death, unless he had been made a ruler. Yea, but flesh and blood cannot endure a blow or a disgrace. Grant that too ; but take this into the account, ' flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' And yet besides this, those persons have but a tender stock of reason, and wisdom, and patience, who have not discourse enough to make them bear an injury, which the philosophy of the Gentiles, without the light of Christianity, taught them to tolerate with so much equanimity and dispassionate entertainment. That person is not a man, who knows not how to suffer the inconvenience of an accident, and indiscretion of light persons : or if he could not, yet certainly that is a mad impatience, when a man, to remedy the pain of a drop of scalding water, shall drench himself in the liquid flames of pitch and a bituminous bath.

7. Truth is, to fight a duel is a thing that all kingdoms are bound to restrain with highest severity : it is a consociation of many the worst acts that a person ordinarily can be guilty of : it is want of charity, of justice, of humility, of trust in God's providence ; it is therefore pride, and murder, and injustice, and infinite unreasonableness ; and nothing of a Christian, nothing of excuse, nothing of honour is in it, if God and wise men be admitted judges of the lists. And it would be con-

sidered, that every one who fights a duel, must reckon himself as dead or dying : (for however any man flatters himself, by saying he will not kill if he could avoid it ; yet rather than be killed he will, and to the danger of being killed his own act exposes him.) Now, is it a good posture for a man to die with a sword in his hand, thrust at his brother's breast, with a purpose either explicit or implicit to have killed him ? Can a man die twice, that in case he miscarries, and is damned for the first ill dying, he may mend his fault, and die better the next time ? Can his vain, imaginary, and fantastic shadow of reputation, make him recompence for the disgrace and confusion of face, and pains and horrors of eternity ? Is there no such thing as forgiving injuries, nothing of the discipline of Jesus in our spirits ? Are we called by the name of Christ, and have nothing in us but the spirit of Cain, and Nimrod, and Joab ? If neither reason nor religion can rule us, neither interest nor safety can determine us, neither life nor eternity can move us, neither God nor wise men be sufficient judges of honour to us ; then our damnation is just, but it is heavy ; our fall is certain, but it is cheap, base, and inglorious. And let not the vanities, or the gallants of the world slight this friendly monition, rejecting it with a scorn, because it talketh like a divine : it were no disparagement if they would do so too, and believe accordingly ; and they would find a better return of honour in the crowns of eternity, by talking like a divine, than by dying like a fool ; by living in imitation and obedience to the laws of the holy Jesus, than by perishing, or committing murder, or by attempting it, or by venturing it, like a weak, impotent, passionate,

and brutish person. Upon this chapter it is sometimes asked, whether a virgin may not kill a ravisher to defend her chastity. Concerning which, as we have no special and distinct warrant, so there is, in reason and analogy of the gospel, much for the negative: for since his act alone cannot make her criminal, and is no more than a wound in my body, or a civil or a natural inconvenience; it is unequal to take a life in exchange for a lesser injury, and it is worse that I take it myself. Some great examples we find in story, and their names are remembered in honour: but we can make no judgment of them, but that their zeal was reprovable for its intemperance, though it had excellency in the matter of the passion.

8. But if we may not secure our honour, or be revenged for injuries by the sword, may we not crave the justice of the law, and implore the vengeance of the judge, who is appointed 'for vengeance against evil-doers?' And the judge being the king's officer, and the king God's vicegerent, it is no more than imploring God's hand; and that is 'giving place to wrath,' which St. Paul speaks of; that is, permitting all to the divine justice. To this I answer, that it is not lawful to go to law for every occasion or slighter injury, because it is very distant from the mercies, forgiveness, and gentleness of a Christian, to contest for trifles: and it is certain, that the injuries, or evil, or charges of trouble and expense will be more vexatious and afflictive to the person contested, than a small instance of wrong is to the person injured. And it is a great intemperance of anger and impotence of spirit, a covetousness and impatience, to appeal to the judge for determination concerning a lock of camel's-hair

or a goat's beard; I mean, any thing that is less than the gravity of laws, or the solemnity of a court, and that does not outweigh the inconveniences of a suit. But this we are to consider in the expression of our blessed Saviour: 'If a man will sue thee at the law, and take thy cloak, let him have thy coat also.'¹ Which words are a particular instance in pursuit of the general precept, 'resist not,' or 'avenge not evil.' The primitive Christians (as it happens in the first fervours of a discipline) were sometimes severe in observation of the letter, not subtly distinguishing counsels from precepts, but swallowing all the words of Christ without chewing or discrimination. They abstained from tribunals, unless they were forced thither by persecutors; but went not thither to repeat their goods. And if we consider suits of law, as they are wrapped in circumstances of action and practice, with how many subtleties and arts they are managed, how pleadings are made mercenary, and that it will be hard to find right counsel that shall advise you to desist if your cause be wrong, (and therefore there is great reason to distrust every question, since, if it be never so wrong, we shall meet advocates to encourage us and plead for it,) what danger of miscarriages, of uncharitableness, anger, and animosities, what desires to prevail, what care and fearfulness of the event, what innumerable temptations do intervene, how many sins are secretly insinuated in our hearts and actions! If a suit were of itself never so lawful, it would concern the duty of a Christian to avoid it, as he prays against temptations, and cuts off the opportunities

¹ Matt. v. 40.

of a sin. It is not lawful for a Christian to sue his brother at the law, unless he can be patient if he loses, and charitable if he be wronged, and can prosecute his end without any mixture of covetousness, or desires to prevail, without envy, or can believe himself wrong when his judge says he is, or can submit to peace when his just cause is oppressed, and rejected, and condemned, and without pain or regret can sit down by the loss of his right, and of his pains, and his money. And if he can do all this, what need he go to law? He may with less trouble and less danger take the loss singly, and expect God's providence for reparation, than disentitle himself to that by his own frowardness, and take the loss when it comes laden with many circumstances of trouble.

9. But however by accident it may become unlawful to go to law in a just cause, or in any, yet by this precept we are not forbidden. To go to law for revenge we are simply forbidden; that is, to return evil for evil; and therefore all those suits which are for vindictive sentences, not for reparative, are directly criminal. To follow a thief to death for spoiling my goods, is extremely unreasonable and uncharitable: for as there is no proportion between my goods and his life, (and therefore I demand it to his evil and injury,) so the putting him to death repairs not my estate: the first makes it in me to be unjust, the latter declares me malicious and revengeful. If I demand an eye for an eye, his eye extinguished will not enlighten mine; and therefore to prosecute him to such purposes, is to resist or render evil with evil, directly against Christ's sermon. But if the postulation of sentence be in order only to restore myself, we find

it permitted by St. Paul, who, when for the scandal's sake, he forbade 'going to law before unbelievers,' and for the danger and temptation's sake, and the latent irregularity which is certainly appendant to ordinary litigations, he is angry indefinitely with them that go to law; yet he adviseth that Christian arbitrators be appointed for decision of emergent questions. And therefore, when the supreme authority hath appointed and regularly established an arbitrator, the permission is the same. St. Paul is angry that among Christians there should be suits, but it is therefore he is chiefly angry because Christians do wrong: they who should rather suffer wrong, yet that they should do it, and defraud their brother, which in some sense enforces suits; that is it he highly blames. But when injustice is done, and a man is in a considerable degree defrauded, then it is permitted to him to repeat his own before Christian arbitrators, whether chosen by private consent or public authority; for that circumstance makes no essential alteration in the question. But then this must be done with as much simplicity and unmingled design as is possible; without any desire of rendering evil to the person of the offender, without arts of heightening the charge, without prolongation, devices, and arts of vexation, without anger and animosities; and then, although accidentally there is some appendant charge to the offending person, that is not accounted upon the stock of revenge, because it was not designed, and is not desired, and is cared for to prevent it as much as may be, and therefore offer was made of private and unchargeable arbitrators: and this being refused, the charge and accidental evil, if it be *less than the loss of my sufferance and injury.*

must be reckoned to the necessity of affairs, and put upon the stock of his injustice, and will not affix a guilt upon the actor. I say, this is true, when the actor hath used all means to accord it without charge, and when he is refused, manages it with as little as he can, and when it is nothing of his desire, but something of his trouble, that he cannot have his own without the lesser accidental evil to the offender, and that the question is great and weighty in its proportion, then a suit of law is of itself lawful. But then let it be remembered how many ways afterwards it may become unlawful, and I have no more to add in this article, but the saying of the son of Sirach : ' He that loves danger shall perish in it.' And certainly he had need be an angel that manages a suit innocently: and he that hath so excellent a spirit as with innocence to run through the infinite temptations of a lawsuit, in all probability hath so much holiness as to suffer the injury, and so much prudence as to avoid the danger. And therefore nothing but a very great defalcation or ruin of a man's estate will, from the beginning to the end, justify such a controversy. When the man is put to it so that he cannot do some other duty without venturing in this, then the grace of God is sufficient for him: but he that enters lightly shall walk dangerously, and a thousand to one but he will fall foully. ' It is utterly a fault among you,' said St. Paul, ' because ye go to law one with another.'¹ It is not always a crime, but even a fault and an irregularity, a recession from Christian perfection, and an entertaining of a danger; which though we escape through, yet it was a fault to have entered into it,

¹ Cor. vi. 7. "ὅλως ἥττημα, οὐκ παράτωμα.

when we might have avoided it. And even then, when it is lawful for us, it is not expedient:¹ for so the apostle sums up his reprehension concerning Christians going to law. We must 'rather take wrong, rather suffer ourselves to be defrauded;'² and when we cannot bear the burden of the loss, then indeed we are permitted to appeal to Christian judges: but then there are so many cautions to be observed, that it may be the remedy is worse than the disease. I only observe this one thing, that St. Paul permits it only in the instance of defraudation, or matter of interest; such as are defending of widows, and orphans, and churches; which, in estimation of law, are, by way of fiction, reckoned to be in pupillage and minority; add also repeating our own interests, when our necessities, or the support of our family and relatives, requires it: for all these are cases of charity or duty respectively. But besides the matter of defraudation, we find no instance expressed, nor any equality and parallel of reason to permit Christians in any case to go to law: because in other things the sentence is but vindictive, and cannot repair us; and therefore demanding justice is a rendering evil in the proper matter of revenge; concerning which I know no scruple but in an action of scandal and ill report. But because an innocent and an holy life will force light out of darkness, and humility and patience and waiting upon God will bring glory out of shame, I suppose he who goes to law to regain his credit, attempts the cure by incompetent remedies. If the accusation be public, the law will call him to an account; and then he is upon his defence, and must

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 12.² Ib. verse 7.

acquit himself with meekness and sincerity: but this allows not him to be the actor, for then it is rather a design of revenge, than a proper deletery of his disgrace, and the purgative of the calumny. For if the accusation can be proved, it was no calumny; if it be not proved, the person is not always innocent; and to have been accused, leaves something foul in his reputation: and therefore he that by law makes it more public, propagates his own disgrace, and sends his shame further than his innocence, and the crime will go whither his absolution shall not arrive.

10. If it be yet further questioned, whether it be lawful to pray for a revenge, or a punishment upon the offender; (I reckon them all one: he that prays for punishment of him that did him personal injury, cannot easily be supposed to separate the punishment from his own revenge;) I answer, that although God be the avenger of all our wrongs, yet it were fit for us to have the affections of brethren, not the designs and purposes of a judge, but leave them to him to whom they are proper. When in the bitterness of soul an oppressed person curses sadly, and prays for vengeance, the calamity of the man, and the violence of his enemy hasten a curse, and ascertain it. But whatever excuses the greatness of the oppression may make I know not; but the bitterness of the spirit, besides that it is pitiable as it is a passion, yet it is violent and less Christian, as it is active and sends forth prayers. 'Woe' is pronounced 'to them by whom the offence cometh;' yet we must 'beware of offences,' because by them we are engaged in a sin: and he that prays for a revenge, hath a revengeful spirit, however it be re-

trained by laws and exterior tendernesses from acting such dire purposes. And he that prays for evenge, may indeed procure a justice to be done upon the injurious person; but oftentimes it happens then to fall on him when we least wish it, when we also have a conjunct interest in the other's preservation and escape: God so punishing the first wrong, that we also may smart for our uncharitable wishes. For the ground of all this discourse is, that it is part of Christian charity to forgive injuries: which forgiveness of the injury, although it may reasonably enough stand with my fair and innocent requiring of my own, which goes no further than a fair repetition; yet in no case can it stand with the acting and desiring revenge, which also, in the formality of revenge, can have no pretence of charity, because it is ineffective to my restitution. This discourse concerns private persons; whether it concern the question of war, and how far, is not proper for this consideration.

PART II.

Of Alms.

1. BUT Christian charity hath its effect also in benefits as well as gentleness and innocence. 'Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'¹ These are the precepts of the Lord, for the substance and the manner of

¹ Matt. v. 42; vi. 3.

alms, for the quantity and freeness of the donative, and the simplicity of him that gives; to which add those other words of his, 'Sell your possessions, and give alms.'¹ This precept, with its circumstances, was intended as a defensative against covetousness and prodigality, and a suppletory to make up the wants, and to make even the breaches of mankind: in which we shall best understand our obligation, if we consider in what proportion we must give alms, and to what persons, and in what manner.

2. First, For the quantity, we shall best take an estimate of it, if we remember the portion which God allows to Christians: 'Having food and raiment, let us be content with it:'² and our blessed Saviour, at the latter end of this sermon, stirs us up to confidence in God, and not to doubt our provisions, by telling that God 'feeds the ravens, and clothes the lilies, and he will much rather do it to us:' he will clothe us and feed us. No more is in the promise, no more is in our need: and therefore whatsoever is beside our needs natural and personal, that is, proportioning our needs to the condition of our life, and exigence of our calling, and quality of our person, all that can be spared from what we modestly and temperately spend in our support, and the supply of our families, and other necessary incidents, all that is to be spent in charity or religion. "He defrauds the poor of their right who detains from them beyond his own necessary, prudent, and convenient supplies,"³ saith St. Jerome. And this is intended to be a retrenchment of all vain expenses, costly feasts,

¹ Luke, xii. 33.

² Tim. vi. 8.

³ James, v. 2, 3, 4.

clothes, pompous retinue, and such excrescences of expense, which, of themselves, serve no of piety or just policy, but by wise and temperate persons are esteemed unnecessary, and out of which the dignity and just value of the man may still be retained. Whatsoever is vainly spent is the portion of the poor; whatsoever we employ in idle gaming, revelling, and wantonness or idleness, was designed by Christ to refresh his bowels, to fill the bellies of the poor; whatsoever lies in our repository useless and superfluous, that is the poor man's inheritance: and certainly there is not any greater baseness than to let a man perish, or be in extreme want of which God gave me for him, and beyond my needs. It is unthankfulness to God, it is unkindness to the poor, it is improvidence to ourselves, it is unfaithfulness in the dispensation of money, of which God made him but the steward and his chest the bank for the exchange and lending it to the indigent. And he that is unmerciful and unjust, is extremely unlike God. But in making this estimate concerning our excrescences, we are to proceed according to the rules of prudence, not making determinations in grains and shillings, but in the greater actions and accountable portions of our estates. And if any man, seeing the necessities of indigent and calamitous persons, will give beyond his ability, he hath the Philippians for his precedent, and he hath God engaged for his payment, and a greater share in heaven for his reward. Only this; as we are to provide for ourselves, so also for our family, and the relatives under charge and nearer endearments; not only for a provision of the present day's entertainment,

but also for all nearer, probable, foreseen, and expected events ; such as are portions for our children, doweries for daughters. But this must not be extended to care and reservations for all possible and far-distant events ; but so much is to be permitted to the divine providence as our present duty gives leave. In which, although a prudent guide and a sober reason are to make application to practice ; yet the rule in general is, that by so much we are to relieve the poor, as we can deduct from such a portion of good things as God permits us to use for our own support, and reasonable and temporal conveniences of our person and condition : ever remembering, that if we increase in our estate, we also should increase in charity ; that in this also may be verified what is written : ‘ He that had much, had nothing over ; and he that had little, had no lack.’ There is in the quantity of these donatives some latitude : but if we sow sparingly, or if we scatter plentifully, so we shall reap. Only we must be careful, that no extreme necessity or biting want lies upon any poor man, whom we can relieve without bringing such a want upon ourselves, which is less than the permissions of fortune which the mercies of God have permitted to us ; that is, food and raiment proper for us. Under food and raiment all the necessities of our life are to be understood. Whatsoever is more than this, is counsel and perfection ; for which a proportionable reward is deposited in the treasures of eternity.

3. Secondly, If question be made concerning the persons who are to be the object of our alms, our rule is plain and easy ; for nothing is required in the person suscipient and capable of alms, but

that he be in misery and want, and unable to relieve himself. This last clause I insert in pursuance of that caution given to the church of Thessalonica by St. Paul: 'If any one will not work, neither let him eat.' For we must be careful that our charity, which is intended to minister to poor men's needs, do not minister to idleness and the love of beggary, and a wandering, useless, unprofitable life. But, abating this, there is no other consideration that can exempt any needy person from participation of your charity: not though he be your enemy; (for that is it which our blessed Saviour means in the appendix of this precept, 'Love your enemies;' that is, according to the exposition of the apostle, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink;') not though he be an unbeliever; not though he be a vicious person. Provided only that the vice be such to which your relief ministers no fuel, and adds no flame: and if the mere necessities of his nature be supplied, it will be a fair security against the danger. But if the vice be in the scene of the body, all free comforts are to be denied him, because they are but incentives of sin, and angels of darkness. This I the rather insert, that the pride and supercilious austerities of some persons become not to them an instrument of excuse, from ministering to needy persons, upon pretence their own sins brought them into that condition. For though the causes of our calamities are many times great secrets of providence; yet suppose the poverty of the man was the effect of his prodigality, or other baseness, it matters not as to our duty how he came into it, but where he is;

lest we also be denied a visit in our sicknesses, and a comfort in our sorrow, or a counsel in our doubts, or aid in any distress, upon pretence that such sadness was procured by our sins: and ten to one but it was so. 'Do good to all,' saith the apostle, 'but especially to the family of faith;' for to them our charity is most proper and proportioned. To all, viz. who are in need, and cannot relieve themselves; in which number persons that can work are not to be accounted. So that if it be necessary to observe an order in our charity, this is, when we cannot supply and suffice for all our opportunities of mercy, then 'let not the brethren of our Lord go away ashamed.' And in other things observe the order and propriety of our own relations: and where there is otherwise no difference, the degree of the necessity is first to be considered. Thus also, if the necessity be final and extreme, whatever the man be, he is first to be relieved before the lesser necessities of the best persons or most holy poor. But the proper objects of our charity are old persons, sick or impotent, laborious and poor housekeepers, widows and orphans, people oppressed or persecuted for the cause of righteousness, distressed strangers, captives and abused slaves, prisoners for debt. To these we must be liberal, whether they be holy or unholy; remembering that we are sons of that Father who makes the dew of heaven to drop upon the dwellings of the righteous and the fields of sinners.

4. Thirdly, The manner of giving alms is an office of Christian prudence; for in what instances we are to exemplify our charity, we must be determined by our own powers, and other's needs. The Scripture reckons entertaining strangers, vi-

siting the sick, going to prisons, feeding and clothing the hungry and naked : to which, by the exigence of the poor and the analogy of charity, many other are to be added. The holy Jesus in the very precept instanced in lending money to them that need to borrow ; and he adds, looking for nothing again ; that is, if they be unable to pay it. Forgiving debts is a great instance of mercy, and a particular of excellent relief : but to imprison men for debt, when it is certain they are not able to pay it, and by that prison will be far more disabled, is an uncharitableness next to the cruelties of savages, and at infinite distance from the mercies of the holy Jesus.

PART III.

Of not Judging.

ANOTHER instance of charity our great Master inserted in this sermon, ‘ not to judge our brother.’ And this is a charity so cheap and so reasonable, that it requires nothing of us but silence in our spirits. We may perform this duty at the charge of a negative : if we meddle not with other men’s affairs, we shall do them no wrong, and purchase to ourselves a peace, and be secured the rather from the unerring sentence of a severe judge. But this interdict forbids only such judging as is ungentle and uncharitable. In criminal causes let us find all the ways to alleviate the burden of the man by just excuses, by extenuating or lessening accidents, by abatement of incident circumstances, by *gentle sentences*, and whatsoever can do relief

to the person, that his spirit be not exasperated, that the crime be not the parent of impudence, that he be not insulted on, that he be invited to repentance, and by such sweetnesses he be led to his restitution. This also, in questions of doubts, obliges us to determine to the more favourable sense: and we also do need the same mercies, and therefore should do well, by our own rigour, not to disentitle ourselves to such possibilities and reserves of charity. But it is foul and base, by detraction and iniquity, to blast the reputation of an honourable action, and the fair name of virtue with a calumny. But this duty is also a part of the grace of justice and of humility, and by its relation and kindred to so many virtues, is furnished with so many arguments of amity and endearment.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and merciful Jesus, who art the great principle and the instrument of conveying to us the charity and mercies of eternity, who didst love us when we were enemies, forgive us when we were debtors, recover us when we were dead, ransom us when we were slaves, relieve us when we were poor, and naked, and wandering, and full of sadness and necessities; give us the grace of charity, that we may be pitiful and compassionate of the needs of our necessitous brethren, that we may be apt to relieve them, and that according to our duty and possibilities we may rescue them from their calamities. Give us courteous, affable, and liberal souls. Let us, by thy example, forgive our debtors, and love our enemies, and do to them offices of civility, and tenderness and relief; always propounding thee for our pattern, and thy mercies for our precedent, and thy precepts for our rule, and thy Spirit for our guide: that we, showing mercy here, may receive the mercies of eternity by thy merits, and by thy charities, and dispensation, O holy and merciful Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XII.

Of the second additional Precept of Christ, viz.

Of Prayer.

1. THE soul of a Christian is the house of God ; ‘Ye are God’s building,’¹ saith St. Paul ; but the house of God is the house of prayer ; and therefore prayer is the work of the soul, whose organs are intended for instruments of the divine praises ; and when every stop and pause of those instruments is but the conclusion of a collect, and every breathing is a prayer, then the body becomes a temple, and the soul is the sanctuary, and more private recess, and place of intercourse. Prayer is the great duty, and the greatest privilege of a Christian : it is his intercourse with God, his sanctuary in troubles, his remedy for sins, his cure of griefs ; and, as St. Gregory calls it, “It is the principal instrument whereby we minister to God, in execution of the decrees of eternal predestination :” and those things which God intends for us, we bring to ourselves by the mediation of holy prayers. Prayer is the “ascent of the mind to God, and a petitioning for such things as we need for our support and duty.”² It is an abstract and summary of Christian religion. Prayer is an act of religion and divine worship, confessing his power and his mercy : it celebrates his attributes, and confesses his glories, and reveres his person,

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 4.

² Ἀνάβασις πρὸς Θεόν, ἢ αἰτήσεις τῶν προσηκόντων παρὰ Θεοῦ. *Damasc. lib. iii. Orthodox. fid.*

and implores his aid, and gives thanks for his blessings. It is an act of humility, condescension, and dependence, expressed in the prostration of our bodies, and humiliation of our spirits. It is an act of charity, when we pray for others: it is an act of repentance, when it confesses and begs pardon for our sins; and exercises every grace, according to the design of the man and the matter of the prayer. So that there will be less need to amass arguments to invite us to this duty; every part is an excellence, and every end of it is a blessing, and every design is a motive, and every need is an impulsive to this holy office. Let us but remember how many needs we have, at how cheap a rate we may obtain their remedies, and yet how honourable the employment is to go to God with confidence, and to fetch our supplies with easiness and joy; and then, without further preface, we may address ourselves to the understanding of that duty by which we imitate the employment of angels and beatified spirits, by which we ascend to God in spirit while we remain on earth, and God descends on earth while he yet resides in heaven, sitting there on the throne of his kingdom.

2. Our first inquiry must be concerning the matter of prayers: for our desires are not to be the rule of our prayers, unless reason and religion be the rule of our desires. The old heathens prayed to their gods for such things which they were ashamed to name publicly before men; and these were their private prayers which they durst not, for their indecency or iniquity, make public. And, indeed, sometimes the best men ask of God things not unlawful in themselves, yet very hurtful to

them. And therefore, as by the Spirit of God and right reason we are taught in general what is lawful to be asked, so it is still to be submitted to God, when we have asked lawful things, to grant to us in kindness, or to deny us in mercy: after all the rules that can be given us, we not being able, in many instances, to judge for ourselves, unless also we could certainly pronounce concerning future contingencies. But the Holy Ghost being now sent upon the church, and the rule of Christ being left to his church, together with his form of prayer taught and prescribed to his disciples, we have sufficient instruction for the matter of our prayers, so far as concerns their lawfulness or unlawfulness: and the rule is easy, and of no variety. 1. For we are bound to pray for all things that concern our duty, all that we are bound to labour for; such as are glory and grace, necessary assistances of the Spirit, and rewards spiritual, heaven and heavenly things. 2. Concerning those things which we may with safety hope for, but are not matter of duty to us, we may lawfully testify our hope and express our desires by petition: but if in their particulars they are under no express promise, but only conveniences of our life and person, it is only lawful to pray for them under condition, that they may conform to God's will and our duty, as they are good, and placed in the best order of eternity. Therefore, 1. For spiritual blessings let our prayers be particularly importunate, perpetual, and persevering. 2. For temporal blessings let them be generally short, conditional, and modest. 3. And whatsoever things are of mixed nature, more spiritual than riches, and less necessary than *graces*, such as are gifts and exterior aids, we may

pray for them, as we may desire them and as we may expect them; that is, with more confidence and less restraint than in the matter of temporal requests, but with more reservedness and less boldness of petition than when we pray for the graces of sanctification. In the first case we are bound to pray: in the second, it is only lawful under certain conditions: in the third, it becomes to us an act of zeal, nobleness, and Christian prudence. But the matter of our prayers is best taught us in the form our Lord taught his disciples; which because it is short, mysterious, and, like the treasures of the Spirit, full of wisdom and latent senses, it is not improper to draw forth those excellencies which are intended and signified by every petition, that by so excellent an authority we may know what it is lawful to beg of God.

3. 'Our Father which art in heaven.' The address reminds us of many parts of our duty. 'If God be our Father, where is his fear' and reverence and obedience? 'If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;' and 'ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do.' Let us not dare to call him Father, if we be rebels and enemies: but if we be obedient, then we know he is our Father, and will give us a child's portion, and the inheritance of sons. But it is observable that Christ here speaking concerning private prayer, does describe it in a form of plural signification, to tell us, that we are to draw into the communication of our prayers all those who are confederated in the common relation of sons of the same father.¹ 'Which art in heaven,' tells us where our hopes

¹ Matt. xxiii. 9; Eph. iv. 6.

and hearts must be fixed, whither our desires and our prayers must tend.¹ *Sursum corda* ; ' where our treasure is, there must our hearts be also.'

4. ' Hallowed be thy name;' that is, let thy name, thy essence, [and glorious attributes be honoured and adored in all the world, believed by faith, loved by charity, celebrated with praises, thanked with eucharist : and let thy name be hallowed in us, as it is in itself. Thy name being called upon us, let us walk worthy of that calling ; that ' our light may shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify thee our Father which art in heaven.' In order also to the sanctification of thy name, grant that all our praises, hymns, eucharistical remembrances and representments of thy glories may be useful, blessed, and effectual for the dispersing thy fame, and advancing thy honour over all the world. This is a direct and formal act of worshipping and adoration. The name of God is representative of God himself, and it signifies, Be thou worshipped and adored, be thou thanked and celebrated with honour and eucharist.

5. ' Thy kingdom come.' That is, as thou hast caused to be preached and published the coming of thy kingdom, the peace and truth, the revelation and glories of the gospel ; so let it come verily and effectually to us and all the world ; that thou mayest truly reign in our spirits, exercising absolute dominion, subduing all thine enemies, ruling in our faculties, in the understanding by faith, in the will by charity, in the passions by mortification, in the members by a chaste and

¹ Nihil nos delectet in infimis, qui Patrem habemus in cœlis. Leo. Ser. de Ascen.—" Nothing should delight us below, who have a Father in heaven."

right use of the parts. And as it was more particularly and in the letter proper at the beginning of Christ's preaching, when he also taught the prayer, that God would hasten the coming of the gospel to all the world, so now also and ever it it will be in its proportion necessary and pious to pray that it may come till, making greater progress in the world, extending itself where yet it is not, and intending it where it is already; that the kingdom of Christ may not only be in us in name, and form, and honourable appellatives, but in effect and power. This petition, in the first ages of Christianity, was not expounded to signify a prayer for Christ's second coming; because the gospel not being preached to all the world, they prayed for the delay of the day of judgment, that Christ's kingdom upon earth might have its proper increment: but since then every age, as it is more forward in time, so it is more earnest in desire to accomplish the intermedial prophecies, that the kingdom of God the Father might come in glories infinite. And, indeed, the kingdom of grace being in order to the kingdom of glory; this, as it is principally to be desired, so may possibly be intended chiefly. Which also is the more probable, because the address of this prayer being to God the Father, it is proper to observe, that the kingdom of grace, or of the gospel, is called the kingdom of the Son; and that of glory, in the style of the Scripture, is the kingdom of the Father.¹ St. German, patriarch of Constantinople, expounds it with some little difference, but not ill: 'Thy kingdom come;' that is, let thy Holy Spirit come into us: for

¹ Colos. i. 13; Rev. i. 9; Matt. xiii. 41; Luke, vi. 20; Matt. xvi. 28.

' the kingdom of heaven is within us,' saith the holy Scripture. And so it intimates our desires that the promise of the Father, and the prophecies of old, and the Holy Ghost, the comforter, may come upon us. Let that ' anointing from above' descend upon us, whereby we may be anointed kings and priests, in a spiritual kingdom and priesthood, by a holy chrism.

6. ' Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.' That is, the whole economy and dispensation of thy providence be the guide of the world, and the measure of our desire; that we be patient in all accidents, conformable to God's will both in doing and in suffering, submitting to changes, and even to persecutions, and doing all God's will: which because without God's aid we cannot do, therefore we beg it of him by prayer; but by his aid we are confident we may do it in the manner of angelical obedience; that is, promptly, readily, cheerfully, and with all our faculties. Or thus: as the angels in heaven serve thee with harmony, concord, and peace, so let us all join in the service of thy Majesty with peace and purity, and love unfeigned; that as all the angels are in peace, and among them there is no persecutor and none persecuted, there is none afflicted, none assaulting or afflicting or assaulted, but all in sweetness and peaceable serenity glorifying thee; so let thy will be done on earth, by all the world, in peace and unity, in charity and tranquillity, that with one heart and one voice we may glorify thee, our universal Father, having in us nothing that may displease thee, having quitted all our own desires and pretensions, living in angelic conformity, our souls subject to thee, and our passions to our souls; that in earth

also thy will may be done as in the spirit and soul, which is a portion of the heavenly substance. These three petitions are addressed to God by way of adoration. In the first, the soul puts on the affections of a child, and divests itself of its own interest, offering itself up wholly to the designs and glorifications of God. In the second, it puts on the relation and duty of a subject to her legitimate prince, seeking the promotion of his regal interest. In the third, she puts on the affection of a spouse, loving the same love, and choosing the same object, and delighting in unions and conformities. The next part descends lower, and makes addresses to God in relation to our own necessities.

7. 'Give us this day our daily bread.'¹ That is, give unto us all that is necessary for the support of our lives, the bread of our necessity; so the Syriac interpreter reads it: 'This day give us the portion of bread, which is day by day necessary.' Give us the bread, or support, which we shall need all our lives; only this day minister our present part: for we pray for the necessary bread or maintenance, which God knows we shall need all our days: but that we 'be not careful for to-morrow,' we are taught to pray, not that it be all at once represented or deposited, but that God would minister it as we need it, how he pleases; but our needs are to be the measure of our desires, our desires must not make our needs; that we may be confident of the divine providence, and not at all covetous. For therefore God feeds his people with ex-

¹ Ἐπίσσιος ab ἐπιῶσα, quod diem posterum significat. Nazarenorum evangelium (referente S. Hieronymo) legit [panem crastinum;] S. Lucas [panem diurnum,] sive indicat necessarium, τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν· πλεῖστός ἐστι κτήσις σύμμετρος πρὸς ἑβραίων.

temporary provisions, that by needing always they may learn to pray to him; and by being still supplied they may learn to trust him for the future, and thank him for that is past, and rejoice in the present. So God rained down manna, giving them their daily portion; and so all fathers and masters minister to their children and servants, giving them their proportion as they eat it, not the meat of a year at once; and yet no child or servant fears want, if his parent or lord be good, and wise, and faithful. And it is necessary for all to pray this prayer. The poor, because they want the bread, and have it not deposited but in the hands of God; 'mercy reaching the fields of heaven,' (as Job's expression is) brings them corn; and the cattle upon a thousand hills are God's, and they find the poor man eat. The rich also need this prayer, because though they have the bread, yet they need the blessing; and what they have now may perish, or be taken from them: and as preservation is a perpetual creation, so the continuing to rich men what God hath already bestowed is a continual giving it. Young men must pray, because their needs are like to be the longer; and old men, because they are present. But all these are to pray but for the present; that which in estimation of law is to be reckoned as imminent upon the present, and part of this state and condition. But it is great impudence, and an unchristian spirit, for old men to lay up provisions, and load their sumpters still the more by how much their way is shorter. But there is also a bread which came down from heaven, a diviner nutriment of our souls, the food and wine of angels; Christ himself, as he communicates himself in the expresses of his word and sacra-

ments : and if we be destitute of this bread, we are miserable and perishing people. We must pray that our souls also may feed upon those celestial viands prepared for us in the antepasts of the gospel, till the great and fuller meal of the supper of the Lamb shall answer all our prayers, and satisfy every desire.

8. 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' Not only those sins of infirmity, invasion, and sudden surprise, which, like excrescences of luxuriant trees, adhere to many actions by inadvertency, and either natural weakness or accidental prejudice; but also all those great sins which were washed off from our souls, and the stain taken away in baptism; or when by choice and after the use of reason we gave up our names to Christ, when we first received the adoption of sons. For even those things were so pardoned, that we must for ever confess and glory in the divine mercy, and still ascertain it by performing what we then promised, and which were the conditions of our covenant. For although Christ hath taken off the guilt, yet still there remains the disreputation. And St. Paul calls himself 'the chiefest of sinners,' not referring to his present condition, but to his former persecuting the church of God, which is one of the greatest crimes in the world, and for ever he asked pardon for it; and so must we, knowing that they may return: if we shake off the yoke of Christ, and break his cords from us, the bands of the covenant evangelical, the sins will return so as to undo us. And this we pray with a tacit obligation to forgive: for so only, and upon that condition we beg pardon to be given or continued respectively; that is, as we from our

hearts forgive them that did us injury in any kind, never entertaining so much as a thought of revenge, but contrariwise, loving them that did us wrong; or so we beg that God should do to us. And, therefore, it is but a lesser revenge to say, I will forgive, but I will never have to do with him: or if he become an object of charity, we must have to do with him to relieve him; because he needs prayers, we must have to do with him, and pray for him; and to refuse his society when it is reasonably and innocently offered, is to deny that to him which Christians have been taught to deny only to persons excommunicate, to persons under punishment; i. e. to persons not yet forgiven. And we shall have but an evil portion, if God should forgive our sins, and should not also love us, and do us grace, and bestow benefits upon us. So we must forgive others; so God forgives us.

9. 'And lead us not into temptation.' St. Cyprian, out of an old Latin copy, reads it, 'Suffer us not to be led into temptation;' that is, suffer us not to be overcome by temptation. And therefore we are bound to prevent our access to such temptation whose very approximation is dangerous, and the contact is irregular and evil; such as are temptations of the flesh. Yet in other temptations the assault sometimes makes confident, and hardens a resolution. For some spirits, who are softened by fair usages, are steeled and emboldened by a persecution. But of what nature soever the temptations be, whether they be such whose approach a Christian is bound to fear, or such which are the certain lot of Christians, (such are troubles and persecutions, into which when we enter we must count it joy,) yet we are to pray that we enter not into the

possession of the temptation, that we be not overcome by it.

10. 'But deliver us from evil.' From the assaults or violence of evil; from the wicked one, who not only presents us with objects, but heightens our concupiscence, and makes us imaginative, fantastical, and passionate; setting on the temptation, making the lust active, and the man full of appetite, and the appetite full of energy and power: therefore deliver us from the evil one, who is interested as an enemy in every hostility and in every danger. Let not Satan have any power or advantage over us; and let not evil men prevail upon us in our danger, much less to our ruin. Make us 'safe under the covering of thy wings' against all fraud and every violence, that no temptation destroy our hopes, or break our strength, or alter our state, or overthrow our glories. In these last petitions, which concern ourselves, the soul hath affections proper to her own needs; as in the former proportion, to God's glory. In the first of these, the affection of a poor, indigent, and necessitous beggar; in the second, of a delinquent and penitent servant; in the last, of a person in affliction or danger. And after all this the reason of our confidence is derived from God.

11. 'For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever.' That is, these things which we beg are for the honour of thy kingdom, for the manifestation of thy power, and the glory of thy name and mercies. And it is an express doxology or adoration, which is apt and fit to conclude all our prayers and addresses to God.

12. These are the generals and great treasures of matter to which all our present or sudden needs

are reducible. And when we make our prayers more minute and particular, if the instance be in matter of duty and merely spiritual, there is no danger: but when our needs are temporal, or we are transported with secular desires, all descending to particulars is a confining the divine providence, a judging for ourselves, a begging a temptation oftentimes, sometimes a mischief; and to beg beyond the necessities of our life, is a mutiny against that providence which assigns to Christians no more but food and raiment for their own use; all other excrescences of possessions being entrusted to the rich man's dispensation only as to a steward, and he shall be accountable for the coat that lies by him as the portion of moths, and for the shoes which are the spoils of mouldiness, and the contumely of plenty. 'Grant me, O Lord, not what I desire, but what is profitable for me.' For sometimes we desire that which in the succeeding event of things will undo us. This rule is in all things that concern ourselves. There is some little difference in the affairs and necessities of other men: for, provided we submit to the divine providence, and pray for good things for others only with a tacit condition, so far as they are good and profitable in order to the best ends, though we be particular, there is no covetousness in it; there maybe indiscretion in the particular, but in the general, no fault, because it is a prayer and a design of charity. For kings, and all that are in authority, we may yet enlarge, and pray for a peaceable reign, true lieges, strong armies, victories and fair success in their just wars, health, long life, and riches; because they have a capacity which private persons have not. And

whatsoever is good for single persons, and whatsoever is apt for their uses as public persons, all that we may and must pray for ; either particularly, for so we may, or in general significations, for so we must at least : ‘ That we may lead a godly, peaceable, and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty ;’ that is St. Paul’s rule, and the prescribed measure and purpose of such prayers. And in this instance of kings, we may pray for defeating all the king’s enemies, such as are truly such. And we have no other restraint upon us in this, but that we keep our desires confined within the limits of the end we are commanded ; that is, so far to confound the king’s enemies, that he may do his duty, and we do ours, and receive the blessing ; ever as much as we can to distinguish the malice from the person. But if the enemies themselves will not also separate what our intentions distinguish, that is, if they will not return to their duty, then let the prayers operate as God pleases, we must be zealous for the end of the king’s authority and peaceable government. By enemies I mean rebels or invaders, tyrants and usurpers ; for in other wars there are many other considerations not proper for this place.

13. The next consideration will be concerning the manner ; I mean both the manner of our persons, and the manner of our prayers ; that is, with what conditions we ought to approach to God, and with what circumstances the prayers may or ought to be performed. The conditions to make our prayers holy and certain to prevail are, first, That we live good lives, endeavouring to conform by holy obedience to all the divine commandments.

This condition is expressly recorded by St. John : ‘ Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God ; and whatsoever we ask of him, we shall obtain.’¹ And St. James affirms, that ‘ the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.’² And our blessed Saviour, limiting the confidence of our prayers for forgiveness to our charity and forgiving others, plainly tells us, that the uncharitable and unrighteous person shall not be heard. And the blind man in the gospel understood well what he said : ‘ Now we know that God heareth not sinners : but if any man be a worshipper, and doth his will, him he heareth.’³ And it was so decreed and resolved a point in the doctrine of their religion, that it was a proverbial saying. And although this discourse of the blind man was of a restrained occasion, and signified, if Christ had been a false prophet, God would not have attested his sermons with the power of miracles ; yet in general also he had been taught by David, ‘ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.’ And, therefore, when men ‘ pray in every place, (for so they are commanded,) let them lift up pure hands without anger and contention.’⁴ And, indeed, although every sin entertained with a free choice and a full understanding is an obstruction to our prayers, yet the special sin of uncharitableness makes the biggest cloud, and is, in the proper matter of it, an indisposition for us to receive mercy. For he who is softened with apprehension of his own needs of mercy, will be tender-hearted towards his brother ;

¹ 1 John, iii. 21, 22 ² James, v. 16. ³ John, ix. 31.

⁴ Psal. lxxvi. 18 ; 1 Tim. ii. 8.

and therefore he that hath no bowels here, can have no aptness there to receive or heartily to hope for mercy. But this rule is to be understood of persons who persevere in the habit and remanent affections of sin: so long as they entertain sin with love, complacency, and joy, they are in a state of enmity with God, and therefore in no fit disposition to receive pardon and the entertainment of friends. But penitent sinners and returning souls, laden and grieved with their heavy pressures, are, next to holy innocents, the aptest persons in the world to be heard in their prayers for pardon; but they are in no further disposition to large favours, and more eminent charities. A sinner in the beginning of his penance will be heard for himself, and yet also he needs the prayers of holy persons more signally than others; for he hath but some very few degrees of dispositions to reconciliation; but in prayers of intercession or mediation for others, only holy and very pious persons are fit to be interested. All men, as matter of duty, must pray for all men: but in the great necessities of a prince, of a church, or kingdom, or of a family, or in a great danger and calamity to a single person, only a Noah, a David, a Daniel, a Jeremiah, an Enoch, or Job are fit and proportioned advocates. God so requires holiness in us that our prayers may be accepted, that he entertains them in several degrees according to the degrees of our sanctity; to fewer or more purposes, according as we are little or great in the kingdom of heaven. As for those irregular donations of good things which wicked persons ask for and have, they are either no mercies, but instruments of cursing and crime; or else they are designs of grace, intended to convince

them of their unworthiness; and so, if they become not instruments of their conversion, they are aggravations of their ruin.

14. Secondly, The second condition I have already explained in the description of the matter of our prayers. For although we may lawfully ask for whatsoever we need, and this leave is consigned to us in those words of our blessed Saviour, 'Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of;' yet because God's providence walks in the great deep, that is, his footsteps are in the water, and leave no impression, no former act of grace becomes a precedent that he will give us that in kind, which then he saw convenient, and therefore gave us; and now he sees to be inconvenient, and therefore does deny. Therefore in all things, but what are matter of necessary and mingled duty, we must send up our prayers; but humility, mortification, and conformity to the divine will must attend for an answer, and bring back, not what the public embassy pretends, but what they have in private instructions to desire; accounting that for the best satisfaction which God pleases, not what I have either unnecessarily, or vainly, or sinfully desired.

15. 'Thirdly, When our persons are disposed by sanctity, and the matter of our prayers is hallowed by prudence and religious intendments, then we are bound to entertain a full persuasion and confident hope that God will hear us. 'What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall obtain them,' said our blessed Saviour. And St. James taught from that oracle,

‘ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God : but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering ; for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed to and fro.’¹ Meaning, that when there is no fault in the matter of our prayers, but that we ask things pleasing to God, and there is no indisposition and hostility in our persons and manners between God and us, then to doubt were to distrust God : for all being right on our parts, if we doubt the issue, the default must be on that part, which to suspect were infinite impiety. But after we have done all we can, if, out of humility and fear that we are not truly disposed, we doubt of the issue, it is a modesty which will not at all discommend our persons, nor impede the event ; provided we at no hand suspect either God’s power or veracity. Putting trust in God is an excellent advantage to our prayers : ‘ I will deliver him,’ saith God, ‘ because he hath put his trust in me.’ And yet distrusting ourselves, and suspecting our own dispositions, as it pulls us back in our actual confidence of the event, so, because it abates nothing of our confidence in God, it prepares us to receive the reward of humility, and not to lose the praise of a holy trusting in the Almighty.

16. These conditions are essential : some other there are which are incidents and accessories, but at no hand to be neglected. And the first is actual or habitual attention to our prayers, which we are to procure with moral and severe endeavours, that we desire not God to hear us when we do not hear ourselves.² To which purpose we must avoid, as much as our duty will permit us, multiplicity of

¹ James, i. 5, 6.

² Eccles. xxxv. 17; Psalm cii. 17.

cares and exterior employments. For a river cut into many rivulets, divides also its strength, and grows contemptible and apt to be forded by a lamb, and drunk up by a summer-sun : so is the spirit of man, busied in variety and divided in itself ; it abates its fervour, cools into indifferency, and becomes trifling by its dispersion and inadvertency. Aquinas was once asked, with what compendium a man might best become learned. He answered, " By reading of one book : " meaning, that an understanding entertained with several objects is intent upon neither, and profits not. And so it is when we pray to God ; if the cares of the world intervene, they choke our desires into an indifferency, and suppress the flame into a smoke, and strangle the spirit. But this being an habitual carelessness, an intemperance of spirit, is an enemy to an habitual attention, and therefore is highly criminal, and makes our prayers to be but the labour of the lips, because our desires are lessened by the remanent affections of the world. But besides an habitual attention in our prayers, that is, a desire in general of all that our prayers pretend to in particular, there is also for the accommodation, and to facilitate the access of our prayers, required, that we attend actually to the words, or sense of every collect or petition. To this we must contend with prayer, with actual dereliction and seposition of all our other affairs, though innocent and good in other kinds, by a present spirit. And the use of it is, that such attention is an actual conversing with God ; it occasions the exercise of many acts of virtue, it increases zeal and fervency, and by reflection enkindles love and holy desires. And although there is no rule to determine the

degree of our actual attention, and it is ordinarily impossible never to wander with a thought, or to be interrupted with a sudden emission into our spirit in the midst of prayers; yet our duty is, by mortification of our secular desires, by suppression of all our irregular passions, by reducing them to indifferency, by severity of spirit, by enkindling our holy appetites and desires of holy things, by silence and meditation and repose, to get as forward in this excellency as we can. To which also we may be very much helped by ejaculatory prayers and short breathings: in which as, by reason of their short abode upon the spirit, there is less fear of diversion, so also they may so often be renewed, that nothing of the devotion may be unspent or expire for want of oil to feed and entertain the flame. But the determination of the case of conscience is this: 1. Habitual attention is absolutely necessary in our prayers; that is, it is altogether our duty to desire of God all that we pray for, though our mind be not actually attending to the form of words; and therefore all worldly desires, that are inordinate, must be rescinded, that we may more earnestly attend on God than on the world. He that prays to God to give him the gift of chastity, and yet secretly wishes rather for an opportunity of lust, and desires God would not hear him, (as St. Austin confesses himself in his youth,) that man sins for want of holy and habitual desires; he prays only with his lips, what he in no sense attests in his heart. 2. Actual attention to our prayers is also necessary, not ever to avoid sin, but that the present prayer become effectual. He that means to feast, and to get thanks of God, must invite the poor: and yet he that invites the rich, in that he

sins not, though he hath no reward of God for that. So that prayer perishes to which the man gives no degree of actual attention: for the prayer is as if it were not; it is no more than a dream, or an act of custom and order, nothing of devotion; and so accidentally becomes a sin, (I mean there where and in what degrees it is avoidable,) by taking God's name in vain. 3. It is not necessary to the prevalency of the prayer, that the spirit actually accompany every clause or word; if it says a hearty Amen, or in any part of it attests the whole, it is such an attention which the present condition of most men will sometimes permit. 4. A wandering of the spirit through carelessness, or any vice, or inordinate passion, is in that degree criminal as is the cause, and it is heightened by the greatness of the interruption. 5. It is only excused by our endeavours to cure it, and by our after acts, either of sorrow or repetition of the prayer, and reinforcing the intention. And certainly, if we repeat our prayer, in which we have observed our spirits too much to wander, and resolve still to repeat it, (as our opportunities permit,) it may in a good degree defeat the purpose of the enemy, when his own arts shall return upon his head, and the wandering of our spirits be made the occasion of a prayer, and the parent of a new devotion. 6. Lastly, according to the degrees of our actual attention, so our prayers are more or less perfect: a present spirit being a great instrument and testimony of wisdom, and apt to many great purposes; and our continual abode with God being a great endearment of our persons by increasing the affections.

17. *Secondly*, The second accessory is intention

of spirit, or fervency; such as was that of our blessed Saviour, who prayed to his Father with strong cries and loud petitions, not clamorous in language, but strong in spirit. St. Paul also, when he was pressed with a strong temptation, prayed thrice; that is, earnestly; and St. James affirms this to be of great value and efficacy to the obtaining blessings: 'The effectual fervent prayer of a just person avails much;' and Elias, though a man of like passions, yet by earnest prayer he obtained rain or drought, according as he desired. Now this is properly produced by the greatness of our desire of heavenly things, our true value and estimate of religion, our sense of present pressures, our fears; and it hath some accidental increases by the disposition of our body, the strength of fancy, and the tenderness of spirit, and assiduity of the dropping of religious discourses; and in all men is necessary to be so great, as that we prefer heaven and religion before the world, and desire them rather, with the choice of our wills and understanding. Though there cannot always be that degree of sensual, pungent, or delectable affections towards religion, as towards the desires of nature and sense; yet ever we must prefer celestial objects, restraining the appetites of the world, lest they be immoderate, and heightening the desires of grace and glory, lest they become indifferent, and the fire upon the altar of incense be extinct. But the greater zeal and fervour of desire we have in our prayers, the sooner and the greater will the return of the prayer be, if the prayer be for spiritual objects. For other things, our desires must be according to our needs, not by a value derived from the nature of the thing, but the usefulness it

is of to us in order to our greater and better purposes.

18. Thirdly, Of the same consideration it is that we 'persevere and be importunate' in our prayers, by repetition of our desires, and not remitting either our affections or our offices, till God, overcome by our importunity, give a gracious answer. Jacob wrestled with the angel all night, and would not dismiss him till he had given him a blessing. 'Let me alone,' saith God; as if he felt a pressure and burden lying upon him by our prayers, or could not quit himself, nor depart, unless we give him leave. And since God is detained by our prayers, and we may keep him as long as we please, and that he will not go away till we leave speaking to him; he that will dismiss him till he hath his blessing knows not the value of his benediction, or understands not the energy and power of a persevering prayer. And to this purpose Christ 'spake a parable, that men ought always to pray, and not faint.' 'Praying without ceasing,' St. Paul calls it; that is, with continual addresses, frequent interpolations, never ceasing the renewing the request till I obtain my desire. For it is not enough to recommend our desires to God with one hearty prayer, and then forget to ask him any more; but so long as our needs continue, so long in all times, and upon all occasions, to renew and repeat our desires: and this is praying continually. Just as the widow did to the unjust judge; she never left going to him, she troubled him every day with her clamorous suit; so must we pray always; that is, every day, and many times every

¹ Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτερῶντες, Rom. xii. 12.

² Luke, xviii. 1.

day, according to our occasions and necessities, or our devotion and zeal, or as we are determined by the customs and laws of a church; never giving over through weariness or distrust, often renewing our desires by a continual succession of devotions, returning at certain and determinate periods. For God's blessings, though they come infallibly, yet not always speedily. Saving only that it is a blessing to be delayed, that we may increase our desire, and renew our prayers, and do acts of confidence and patience, and ascertain and increase the blessing when it comes. For we do not more desire to be blessed, than God does to hear us importunate for blessing; and he weighs every sigh, and bottles up every tear, and records every prayer, and looks through the cloud with delight to see us upon our knees; and when he sees his time, his light breaks through it, and shines upon us. Only we must not make our accounts for God according to the course of the sun, but the measures of eternity. He measures us by our needs, and we must not measure him by our impatience. 'God is not slack, as some men count slackness,' saith the apostle; and we find it so, when we have waited long. All the elapsed time is no part of the tediousness; the trouble of it is passed with itself: and for the future, we know not how little it may be; for aught we know we are already entered into the cloud that brings the blessing. However, pray till it comes; for we shall never miss to receive our desire, if it be holy, or innocent, and safe; or else we are sure of a great reward of our prayers.

19. And in this so determined, there is no danger of blasphemy or vain repetitions. For those repetitions are vain which repeat the words, not

the devotion; which renew the expression, and not the desire: and he that may pray the same prayer to-morrow which he said to-day, may pray the same at night which he said in the morning, and the same at noon which he said at night; and so in all the hours of prayer, and in all the opportunities of devotion. Christ, in his agony, 'went thrice, and said the same words,' but he had intervals for repetition; and his need and his devotion pressed him forward. And whenever our needs do so, it is all one if we say the same words or others, so we express our desire, and tell our needs, and beg the remedy. In the same office and the same hour of prayer to repeat the same things often hath but few excuses to make it reasonable, and fewer to make it pious. But to think that the prayer is better for such repetition, is the fault which the holy Jesus condemned in the Gentiles, who in their hymns would say a name over an hundred times. But in this we have no rule to determine us in numbers and proportion, but right reason. God loves not any words the more for being said often; and those repetitions which are unreasonable in prudent estimation, cannot in any account be esteemed pious. But where a reasonable cause allows the repetition, the same cause that makes it reasonable, makes it also proper for devotion. He that speaks his needs, and expresses nothing but his fervour and greatness of desire, cannot be vain or long in his prayers. He that speaks impertinently, that is, unreasonably and without desires, is long, though he speak but two syllables. He that thinks for speaking much to be heard the sooner, thinks God is delighted in the labour of the lips. But when

reason is the guide, and piety is the rule, and necessity is the measure, and desire gives the proportion, let the prayer be very long: he that shall blame it for its length, must proclaim his disrelish both of reason and religion, his despite of necessity, and contempt of zeal.

20. As a part and instance of our importunity in prayer, it is usually reckoned and advised, that in cases of great, sudden, and violent need, we corroborate our prayers with a vow of doing something holy and religious in an uncommanded instance, something to which God had not formerly bound our duty, though fairly invited our will: or else, if we choose a duty in which we were obliged, then to vow the doing of it in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the will, with a more fervent repetition of the acts, with some more noble circumstance, with a fuller assent of the understanding; or else adding a new promise to our old duty, to make it become more necessary to us, and to secure our duty. In this case, as it requires great prudence and caution in the susception, lest what we piously intend obtain a present blessing, and lay a lasting snare; so if it be prudent in the manner, holy in the matter, useful in the consequence, and safe in all the circumstances of the person, it is an endearing us and our prayer to God by the increase of duty and charity, and therefore a more probable way of making our prayers gracious and acceptable. And the religion of vows was not only hallowed by the example of Jacob at Bethel, of Hannah praying for a child and God hearing her, of David vowing a temple to God, and made regular and safe by the rules and cautions in Moses's law, but left by our blessed

Saviour in the same constitution he found it, he having innovated nothing in the matter of vows. And it was practised accordingly in the instance of St. Paul at Cenchrea; of Ananias and Sapphira, who vowed their possessions to the use of the church; and of the widows in the apostolical age, who therefore vowed to remain in the state of widowhood, because concerning them who married after the entry into religion St. Paul says, 'they have broken their first faith.' And such were they of whom our blessed Saviour affirms, 'that some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven;' that is, such who promise to God a life of chastity. And concerning the success of prayer so seconded with a prudent and religious vow, besides the instances of Scripture,¹ we have the perpetual experience and witness of all Christendom: and in particular our Saxon kings have been remarked for this part of importunity in their own chronicles. Oswy got a great victory with unlikely forces against Penda the Dane, after his earnest prayer, and an appendant vow: and Ceadwalla obtained of God power to recover the Isle of Wight from the hands of infidels, after he had prayed, and promised to return the fourth part of it to be employed in the proper services of God and of religion. This can have no objection or suspicion in it among wise and disabused persons; for it can be nothing but an increasing and a renewed act of duty, or devotion, or zeal, or charity, and the importunity of prayer acted in a more vital and real expression.

21. All else that is to be considered concerning prayer is extrinsical and accidental to it. First,

¹ Eccles. v. 4, 5; Psal. cxxxii. 1, 2; Deut. xxiii. 21; Acts, xviii. 18.

prayer is public or private ; in the communion or society of saints, or in our closets : these prayers have less temptation to vanity ; the other have more advantages of charity, example, fervour, and energy. In public offices we avoid singularity, in the private we avoid hypocrisy. Those are of more edification, these of great retiredness and silence of spirit : those serve the needs of all the world in the first intention, and our own by consequence ; these serve our own needs first, and the public only by a secondary intention : these have more pleasure, they more duty : these are the best instruments of repentance, where our confessions may be more particular, and our shame less scandalous ; the other are better for eucharist and instruction, for edification of the church and glorification of God.

22. Secondly, The posture of bodies in prayer had as great variety as the ceremonies and civilities of several nations came to. The Jews most commonly prayed standing : so did the Pharisee and the Publican in the temple ;¹ so did the primitive Christians in all their greater festivals and intervals of jubilee : in their penances they kneeled. The monks in Cassian sat when they sang the Psalter. And in every country, whatsoever by the

¹ Nehem. ix. 5 ; Mark. xi. 25 ; Luke, xviii. 11.

Adoraturi sedeant, dixit Numa Pompilius apud Plutarch. id est, sint sedato animo. Et καθῆσθαι προσκυνήσουσας dictum proverbialiter ad eundem sensum. Vide S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 5, de Cura pro mortuis.

Depositisque suis ornamentis pretiosis,
Simplicis et tenuis fruitur velamine vestis,
Inter sacratos noctis venerabilis hymnos
Intrans nudatis templi sacra limina plantis
Et prono sacram vultu prostratus ad aram ;
Corpus frigoreæ sociavit nobile terræ.

S. Rosweid de Hen. Imper. et de Orbis.

custom of the nation was a symbol of reverence and humility, of silence and attention, of gravity and modesty, that posture they translated to their prayers. But in all nations bowing the head, that is, a laying down our glory at the feet of God, was the manner of worshippers. And this was always the more humble and the lower, as their devotion was higher; and was very often expressed by prostration, or lying flat upon the ground: and this all nations did and all religions. Our deportment ought to be grave, decent, humble, apt for adoration, apt to edify: and when we address ourselves to prayer, not instantly to leap into the office, as the judges of the Areopage into their sentence, without preface or preparatory affections; but, considering in what presence we speak, and to what purposes, let us balance our fervour with reverential fear: and when we have done, not rise from the ground as if we vaulted, or were glad we had done; but, as we begin with desires of assistance, so end with desires of pardon and acceptance, concluding our longer offices with a shorter mental prayer of more private reflection and reverence, designing to mend what we have done amiss, or to give thanks and proceed if we did well, and according to our powers.

23. Thirdly, In private prayers it is permitted to every man to speak his prayers, or only to think them, which is a speaking to God. Vocal or mental prayer is all one to God, but in order to us they have their several advantages. The sacrifice of the heart and the calves of the lips make up a holocaust to God. But words are the arrest of the desires, and keep the spirit fixed, and in less permissions to wander from fancy to fancy: and

mental prayer is apt to make the greater fervour, if it wander not. Our office is more determined by words; but we then actually think of God when our spirits only speak. Mental prayer, when our spirits wander, is like a watch standing still because the spring is down; wind it up again, and it goes on regularly: but in vocal prayer, if the words run on and the spirit wanders, the clock strikes false, the hand points not to the right hour, because something is in disorder, and the striking is nothing but noise. In mental prayer we confess God's omniscience; in vocal prayer we call the angels to witness. In the first, our spirits rejoice in God; in the second, the angels rejoice in us. Mental prayer is the best remedy against lightness and indifferency of affections; but vocal prayer is the aptest instrument of communion. That is more angelical, but yet fittest for the state of separation and glory; this is but human, but it is apter for our present constitution. They have their distinct properties, and may be used according to several accidents, occasions, or dispositions.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy and eternal God, who hast commanded us to pray unto thee in all our necessities, and to give thanks unto thee for all our instances of joy and blessing, and to adore thee in all thy attributes and communications, thy own glories, and thy eternal mercies; give unto me, thy servant, the spirit of prayer and supplication, that I may understand what is good for me, that I may desire regularly, and choose the best things, that I may conform to thy will, and submit to thy disposing, relinquishing my own

affections and imperfect choice. Sanctify my heart and spirit, that I may sanctify thy name, and that I may be gracious and accepted in thine eyes. Give me the humility and obedience of a servant, that I may also have the hope and confidence of a Son, making humble and confident addresses to the throne of grace; that in all my necessities I may come to thee for aid, and may trust in thee for a gracious answer, and may receive satisfaction and supply.

II.

Give me a sober, diligent, and recollected spirit in my prayers, neither choked with cares, nor scattered by levity, nor discomposed by passion, nor estranged from thee by inadvertency, but fixed fast to thee by the indissoluble bands of a great love and a pregnant devotion. And let the beams of thy Holy Spirit descending from above enlighten and enkindle it with great fervours, and holy importunity, and unwearied industry; that I may serve thee, and obtain thy blessing by the assiduity and zeal of perpetual religious offices. Let my prayers come before thy presence, and the lifting up of my hands be a daily sacrifice, and let the fires of zeal not go out by night or day; but unite my prayers to the intercession of thy holy Jesus, and to a communion of those offices which angels and beatified souls do pay before the throne of the Lamb, and at the celestial altar: that my prayers, being hallowed by the merits of Christ, and being presented in the phial of the saints, may ascend thither where thy glory dwells, and from whence mercy and eternal benediction descends upon the church.

III.

Lord, change my sins into penitential sorrow, my sorrow to petition, my petition to eucharist; that my prayers may be consummate in the adorations of eternity, and the glorious participation of the end of our hopes and prayers, the fulness of never-failing charity and fruition of thee, O holy and eternal God, blessed Trinity, and mysterious Unity, to whom all honour, and worship, and thanks, and confession, and glory, be ascribed for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIII.

Of the third additional Precept of Christ, viz.

Of the Manner of Fasting.

1. **FASTING** being directed in order to other ends, as for mortifying the body, taking away that fuel which ministers to the flame of lust, or else relating to what is past, when it becomes an instrument of repentance, and a part of that revenge which St. Paul affirms to be the effect of godly sorrow, is to take its estimate for value, and its rules for practice, by analogy and proportion to those ends to which it does co-operate. Fasting before the holy sacrament is a custom of the Christian church, and derived to us from great antiquity; and the use of it is, that we might express honour to the mystery, by suffering nothing to enter into our mouths before the symbols. Fasting to this purpose is not an act of mortification, but of reverence and venerable esteem of the instruments of religion, and so is to be understood. And thus also, not to eat or drink before we have said our morning devotions, is esteemed to be a religious decency, and preference of prayer and God's honour before our temporal satisfaction, a symbolical attestation that we esteem the words of God's mouth more than our necessary food. It is like the zeal of Abraham's servant, who would not eat nor drink till he had done his errand: and in pursuance of this act of religion, by the tradition of their father it grew to be a custom of the Jewish nation, that they should not eat bread upon their solemn festi-

vals before the sixth hour; that they might first celebrate the rites of their religious solemnities, before they gave satisfaction to the lesser desires of nature. And therefore it was a reasonable satisfaction of the objection made by the assembly against the inspired apostles in pentecost, 'These are not drunk, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day:' meaning, that the day being festival, they knew it was not lawful for any of the nation to break their fast before the sixth hour; for else they might easily have been drunk by the third hour, if they had taken their morning's drink in a freer proportion. And true it is that religion snatches even at little things; and as it teaches us to observe all the great commandments and significations of duty, so it is not willing to pretermit any thing which, although by its greatness it cannot of itself be considerable, yet by its smallness may become a testimony of the greatness of the affection, which would not omit the least minutes of love and duty. And therefore, when the Jews were scandalized at the disciples of our Lord for rubbing the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, as they walked through the fields early in the morning, they intended their reproof, not for breaking the rest of the day, but the solemnity; for eating before the public devotions were finished. Christ excused it by the necessity and charity of the act; they were hungry, and therefore, having so great need, they might lawfully do it; meaning, that such particles and circumstances of religion are not to be neglected, unless where greater cause of charity or necessities does supervene.

2. But when fasting is in order to greater and more concerning purposes, it puts on more reli-

gion, and becomes a duty, according as it is necessary or highly conducing to such ends, to the promoting of which we are bound to contribute all our skill and faculties. Fasting is principally operative to mortification of carnal appetites, to which feasting and full tables do minister aptness and power and inclinations. 'When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled by troops in the harlots' houses.' And if we observe all our own vanities, we shall find that upon every sudden joy, or a prosperous accident, or an opulent fortune, or a pampered body, and highly spirited and inflamed, we are apt to rashness, levities, inconsiderate expressions, scorn, and pride, idleness, wantonness, curiosity, niceness, and impatience. But fasting is one of those afflictions which reduces our body to want, our spirits to soberness, our condition to sufferance, our desires to abstinence and customs of denial; and so, by taking off the inundations of sensuality, leaves the enemies within in a condition of being easilier subdued. Fasting directly advances towards chastity; and by consequence and indirect powers to patience, and humility, and indifferency. But then it is not the fast of a day that can do this; it is not an act, but a state of fasting, that operates to mortification. A perpetual temperance and frequent abstinence may abate such proportions of strength and nutriment, as to procure a body mortified and lessened in desires. And thus St. Paul kept his body under, using severities to it for the taming its rebellions and distemperatures. And St. Jerome reports of St. Hilarion,¹ that when he had

¹ Hieron. in Vita S. Hilarion.

fasted much, and used coarse diet, and found his lust too strong for such austerities, he resolved to increase it to the degree of mastery, lessening his diet and increasing his hardship, till he should rather think of food than wantonness. And many times the fastings of some men are ineffectual, because they promise themselves cure too soon, or make too gentle applications, or put less proportions into their antidotes. I have read of a maiden, that, seeing a young man much transported with her love, and that he ceased not to importune her with all the violent pursuits that passion could suggest, told him, she had made a vow to fast forty days with bread and water, of which she must discharge herself, before she could think of corresponding to any other desire; and desired of him, as a testimony of his love, that he also would be a party in the same vow. The young man undertook it, that he might give probation of his love; but because he had been used to a delicate and nice kind of life, in twenty days he was so weakened that he thought more of death than love; and so got a cure for his intemperance, and was wittily cozened into remedy. But St. Jerome's counsel in this question is most reasonable, not allowing violent and long fasts, and then returns to an ordinary course; for these are too great changes of diet to consist with health, and too sudden and transient to obtain a permanent and natural effect: but "a belly always hungry,"¹ a table never full, a meal little and necessary, no extravagance, no freer repast, this is a state of fasting which will be found to be of best avail to suppress pungent lusts and rebellious de-

¹ *Parcus cibus, et venter semper esuriens triduana jejunia superant.* *S. Hieron. ep. 8. ad Demetriad.*

sires. And it were well to help this exercise with the assistances of such austerities which teach patience, and ingenerate a passive fortitude, and accustom us to a despite of pleasures, and which are consistent with our health : for if fasting be left to do the work alone, it may chance either to spoil the body or not to spoil the lust. Hard lodging, uneasy garments, laborious postures of prayer, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsels ; these are in the rank of bodily exercises, which though (as St. Paul says) of themselves ‘ they profit little,’ yet they accustom us to acts of self-denial in exterior instances, and are not useless to the designs of mortifying carnal and sensual lusts. They have ‘ a proportion of wisdom’¹ with these cautions ; viz. in will-worship ; that is, in voluntary susception, when they are not imposed as necessary religion :² in humility ; that is, without contempt of others that use them not : ‘ in neglecting of the body ;’ that is, when they are done for discipline and mortification, that the flesh by such handlings and rough usages become less satisfied and more despised.

3. As fasting hath respect to the future, so also to the present ; and so it operates in giving assistance to prayer. There is a kind of devil that is not to be ejected but by prayer and fasting ; that is, prayer elevated and made intense by a defecate and pure spirit, not laden with the burden of meat and vapours. St. Basil affirms, that there are certain

¹ Colos. ii. 23. Λόγον σοφίας.

² Εἰ τις ἐπίσκοπος, &c. γάμος, ἢ κρεῶν, ἢ οἶνος ἢ δι' ἀσκησιν, ἀλλὰ διὰ βδελυρίαν ἀπέχεται, ἢ διορθώσῃ, ἢ καθαιρείσῃ. Can. Apost. 50.

angels deputed by God to minister, and to describe all such in every church who mortify themselves by fasting;' as if paleness and a meagre visage were that mark in the forehead which the angel observed, when he signed the saints in Jerusalem to escape the judgment. Prayer is the wings of the soul, and fasting is the wings of prayer.¹ Tertullian calls it, the nourishment of prayer.² But this is a discourse of Christian philosophy; and he that chooses to do any act of spirit, or understanding, or attention after a full meal, will then perceive that abstinence had been the better disposition to any intellectual and spiritual action. And therefore the church of God ever joined fasting to their more solemn offices of prayer. The apostles fasted and prayed 'when they laid hands,' and invoked the Holy Ghost upon Saul and Barnabas.⁴ And these also, 'when they had prayed with fasting, ordained elders in the churches of Lystra and Iconium.'⁵ And the vigils of every holiday tell us, that the devotion of the festival is promoted by the fast of the vigils.

4. But when fasting relates to what is past, it becomes an instrument of repentance, it is a punitive and an afflictive action, an effect of godly sorrow, a testimony of contrition, 'a judging of ourselves,' and chastening our bodies, 'that we be not

¹ Serm. v. de Jejun.

² Jejunium animæ nostræ alimentum, leves ei pennas producit. S. Bern. Serm. in Vigil. S. Andræ.

³ Ἀκρίδας ἐσθίουντα Ἰωάννην, ἃ πτεροφυήσαντα τὴν ψυχὴν. dixit S. Chrysost.

⁴ Jejunii preces alere, lacrymari, et mugire noctes diēscue ad Dominum. Tertull.

⁵ Acts, xiii. 3.

⁶ Ibid. xiv. 23.

judged of the Lord.'¹ The fast of the Ninevites, and the fast the prophet Joel calls for, and the discipline of the Jews in the rites of expiation, proclaim this usefulness of fasting in order to repentance. And indeed it were a strange repentance that had no sorrow in it, and a stranger sorrow that had no affliction; but it were the strangest scene of affliction in the world, when the sad and afflicted person shall eat freely, and delight himself, and to the banquets of a full table serve up the chalice of tears and sorrow, and no bread of affliction. Certainly he that makes much of himself, hath no great indignation against the sinner, when himself is the man. And it is but a gentle revenge and an easy judgment, when the sad sinner shall do penance in good meals, and expiate his sin with sensual satisfaction. So that fasting relates to religion in all variety and difference of time: it is an antidote against the poison of sensual temptations, an advantage to prayer, and an instrument of extinguishing the guilt and the affections of sin, by judging ourselves, and representing in a judicatory of our own, even ourselves being judges, that sin deserves condemnation, and the sinner merits a high calamity. Which excellencies I repeat in the words of Baruch the scribe, he that was amanuensis to the prophet Jeremiah: 'The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, will give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord.'

5. But now as fasting hath divers ends, so also it hath divers laws. If fasting be intended as an instrument of prayer, it is sufficient that it be of that

¹ Μεράνοια χωρίς νηστείας ἀργή. S. Basil. Joel, ii. 15; Levit. xxiii. 27, &c.; Isai. xxii. 12.

quality and degree that the spirit be clear, and the head undisturbed ; an ordinary act of fast, an abstinence from a meal, or a deferring it, or a lessening it when it comes, and the same abstinence repeated according to the solemnity and intendment of the offices. And this is evident in reason, and the former instances, and the practice of the church, dissolving some of her fasts, which were in order only to prayer, by noon, and as soon as the great and first solemnity of the day is over. But if fasting be intended as a punitive act, and an instrument of repentance, it must be greater. St. Paul, at his conversion, continued three days without eating or drinking. It must have in it so much affliction as to express the indignation, and to condemn the sin, and to judge the person. And although the measure of this cannot be exactly determined, yet the general proportion is certain : for a greater sin there must be a greater sorrow, and a greater sorrow must be attested with a greater penalty. And Ezra declares his purpose thus : ‘ I proclaimed a fast, that we might afflict ourselves before God.’¹ Now this is no further required, nor is it in this sense further useful, but that it be a trouble to the body, an act of judging and severity ; and this is to be judged by proportion to the sorrow and indignation, as the sorrow is to the crime. But this affliction needs not to leave any remanent effect upon the body ; but such transient sorrow which is consequent to the abstinence of certain times designed for the solemnity, is sufficient as to this purpose. Only it is to be renewed often, as our repentance must be habitual and lasting : but it may be com-

¹ Ezra, viii. 21. Vid. Dan. x. 12; Psal. xxxv. 13; Levit. xvi. 29, 30, 31; Isai. lviii. 3.

muted with other actions of severity according to the customs of a church or city of the persons, or the opportunities. But if the fasting be intended for mortification, then it is fit to be more severe than by continuance, and quantity, and repentance, total abstinences without that is, during the solemnity, short and most apt: but towards the mortifying short and sharp fasts are not reasonable of fasting, an habitual subtraction from the body, a long and lasting ausing in degrees, but not violent in any sort of fasting we must be highly careful not to violate a duty by fondness of an insatiable lust, let it not destroy the body, spirit, or violate our health, or impede part of our necessary duty. As we must that our fast be reasonable, serious, and to the end of our designs, so we must be careful not to help one duty uncertainly, it do not destroy another. Let us do it like honest and just, without artifices and hypocrisy; let us also do it like wise persons, that it be in itself unreasonable, nor by accident criminal.

6. In the pursuance of this discipline the doctors of the church and guides have not unusefully prescribed other circumstances; as that all the other acts be symbolical to our fasting. If we fast for mortification, let us entertain nothing of a sensual semblance to invite a lust; no sensual or freer entertainments of our body, to

corroborate a passion. If we fast that we may pray the better, let us remove all secular thoughts for that time; for it is vain to alleviate our spirits of the burden of meat and drink, and to depress them with the loads of care. If for repentance we fast, let us be most curious that we do nothing contrary to the design of repentance; knowing that a sin is more contrary to repentance than fasting is to sin: and it is the greatest stupidity in the world, to do that thing which I am now mourning for, and for which I do judgment upon myself. And let all our actions also pursue the same design, helping one instrument with another, and being so zealous for the grace, that we take in all the aids we can to secure the duty. For to fast from flesh, and to eat delicate fish; not eat meat, but to drink rich wines freely; to be sensual in the objects of our other appetites, and restrained only in one; to have no dinner, and that day to run on hunting, or to play at cards, are not handsome instances of sorrow, or devotion, or self-denial. It is best to accompany our fasting with the retirements of religion and the enlargements of charity, giving to others what we deny to ourselves. These are proper actions; and although not in every instance necessary to be done at the same time, (for a man may give his alms in other circumstances, and not amiss,) yet as they are very convenient and proper to be joined in that society, so to do any thing contrary to religion or to charity, to justice or to piety, to the design of the person or the design of the solemnity, is to make that become a sin which of itself was no virtue, but was capable of being hallowed by the end and the manner of its execution.

7. This discourse hath hitherto related to private

fasts, or else to fasts indefinitely. For what rules soever every man is bound to observe in private for fasting piously, the same rules the governors of a church are to intend in their public prescription. And when once authority hath intervened, and proclaimed a fast, there is no new duty incumbent upon the private, but that we obey the circumstances, letting them choose the time and the end for us. And though we must prevaricate neither, yet we may improve both; we must not do less, but we may enlarge: and when fasting is commanded only for repentance, we may also use it to prayers and to mortification. And we must be curious that we do not obey the letter of the prescription, and violate the intention, but observe all that care in public fasts which we do in private; knowing that our private ends are included in the public, as our persons are in the communion of saints, and our hopes in the common inheritance of sons; and see that we do not fast in order to a purpose, and yet use it so that it shall be to no purpose. Whosoever so fasts as that it be not effectual in some degree towards the end, or so fasts that it be accounted of itself a duty and an act of religion, without order to its proper end, makes his act vain, because it is unreasonable; or vain, because it is superstitious.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesu, who didst for our sake fast forty days and forty nights, and hast left to us thy example, and thy prediction, that in the days of thy absence from us, we, thy servants and children of thy bride-chamber, should fast; teach us to

do this act of discipline so that it may become an act of religion. Let us never be like Esau, valuing a dish of meat above a blessing; but let us deny our appetites of meat and drink, and accustom ourselves to the yoke, and substract the fuel of our lusts, and the incentives of all our unworthy desires: that our bodies being free from the intemperances of nutriment, and our spirits from the load and pressure of appetite, we may have no desires but of thee: that our outward man daily decaying by the violence of time, and mortified by the abatements of its too free and unnecessary support, it may by degrees resign to the entire dominion of the soul, and may pass from vanity to piety, from weakness to ghostly strength, from darkness and mixtures of impurity to great transparence and clarity in the society of a beatified soul, reigning with thee in the glories of eternity, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIV.

Of the Miracles which Jesus wrought for confirmation of his Doctrine, during the whole time of his Preaching.

1. WHEN Jesus had ended his sermon on the Mount, he descended into the valleys, to consign his doctrine by the power of miracles and the excellency of a rare example; that he might not lay a yoke upon us which himself also would not bear: but as he became the author, so also 'the finisher of our faith;' what he designed in proposition, he represented in his own practice;' and by these acts

¹ Nec monstravit tantum, sed etiam præcessit, nè quis difficultatis gratiâ iter virtutis horreret. Lactant.—“He not only pointed out the path, but traversed it himself, that no one might fear the ways of virtue on account of their difficulty.”

“Ἀπαντὲς ἔσμεν τὸ νουθετεῖν σοφοί,

Αὐτοὶ δὲ ἁμαρτάνοντες ἐ γινώσκομεν.—Menand.

“We are all ready to admonish, but know not when we excuse ourselves.”

made a new sermon, teaching all prelates and spiritual persons to descend from their eminency of contemplation, and the authority and business of their discourses, to apply themselves to do more material and corporal mercies to afflicted persons, and to preach by example as well as by their homilies. For he that teaches others well, and practises contrary, is like a fair candlestick bearing a goodly and bright taper, which sends forth light to all the house, but round about itself there is a shadow and circumstant darkness. The prelate should be the light consuming and spending itself to enlighten others, scattering his rays round about from the angles of contemplation and from the corners of practice, but himself always tending upwards, till at last he expires into the element of love and celestial fruition.

2. But the miracles which Jesus did were next to infinite; and every circumstance of action that passed from him, as it was intended for mercy, so also for doctrine; and the impotent or diseased persons were not more cured than we instructed. But because there was nothing in the actions but what was a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in his sermons, in the sermon we must look after our duty, and look upon his practice as a verification of his doctrine, and instrumental also to other purposes. Therefore, in general, if we consider his miracles, we shall see that he did design them to be a compendium of faith and charity. For he chose to instance his miracles in actions of mercy, that all his powers might especially determine upon bounty and charity;¹ and yet his acts of charity

¹ Acts, x. 38.

were so miraculous that they became an argument of the divinity of his person and doctrine. Once he turned water into wine, which was a mutation by a supernatural power, in a natural suscipient, where a person was not the subject, but an element: and yet this was done to rescue the poor bridegroom from affront and trouble, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. All the rest, (unless we except his walking upon the waters,) during his natural life, were actions of relief and mercy, according to the design of God, manifesting his power most chiefly in showing mercy.

3. The great design of miracles was to prove his mission from God, to convince the world of sin, to demonstrate his power of forgiving sins, to endear his precepts, and that his disciples might believe in him, and that believing they might have life through his name.¹ For he to whom God, by doing miracles, gave testimony from heaven, must needs be sent from God; and he who had received power to restore nature, and to create new organs, and to extract from incapacities, and from privations to reduce habits, was Lord of nature, and therefore of all the world; and thus could not but create great confidences in his disciples, that himself would verify those great promises upon which he established his law. But that the argument of miracles might be infallible, and not apt to be re-proved, we may observe its eminency by divers circumstances of probability heightened up to the degree of moral demonstration.

4. First, The holy Jesus 'did miracles which no man (before him, or at that time) ever did.'² Moses

¹ John, xx. 31; x. 38; v. 36. ² John, xv. 24.

smote the rock and water gushed out ; but he could not turn that water into wine. Moses cured no diseases by the empire of his will, or the word of his mouth ; but Jesus ' healed all infirmities.' Elisha raised a dead child to life ; but Jesus raised one who had been dead four days, and buried, and corrupted. Elias and Samuel, and all the prophets, and the succession of the high-priests, in both the temples, put all together, never did so many or so great miracles as Jesus did. He cured leperous persons by his touch. He restored sight to the blind, who were such, not by any intervening accident hindering the act of the organ, but by nature ; who were born blind, and whose eyes had not any natural possibility to receive sight ; who could never see without creating of new eyes for them, or some integral part co-operating to vision ; and therefore the miracle was wholly an effect of a divine power, for nature did not at all co-operate ; or, that I may use the elegant expression of Dante, it was such

“ ——— à cui natura

“ Non scaldo ferro mai, ne batte ancude,”

for which nature never did heat the iron, nor beat the anvil. He made crooked limbs become straight, and the lame to walk ; and habitual diseases and inveterate, of eighteen years,' continuance, (and one of thirty-eight,) did disappear at his speaking, like darkness at the presence of the sun. He cast out devils, who by the majesty of his person were forced to confess and worship him ; and yet by his humility and restraints were commanded silence, or to go whither he pleased : and without his leave all the powers of hell were as infirm and impotent

as a withered member, and were not able to stir. He raised three dead persons to life : he fed thousands of people with two small fishes and five little barley-cakes : and as a consummation of all power and all miracles, he foretold, and verified it, that himself would rise from the dead after three days' sepulture. But when himself had told them he did miracles which no man else ever did, they were not able to reprove his saying with one single instance ; but the poor blind man found him out one instance to verify his assertion : 'It was yet never heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.'

5. Secondly, The scene of his preaching and miracles was Judea, which was the pale of the church, and God's inclosed portion, 'of whom were the oracles and the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come,' and to whom he was promised. Now, since these miracles were for verification of his being the Christ, the promised Messias, they were then to be esteemed a convincing argument, when all things else concurring, as the predictions of the prophets, the synchronisms, and the capacity of his person, he brought miracles to attest himself to be the person so declared and signified. God would not suffer his people to be abused by miracles, nor from heaven would speak so loud in testimony of any thing contrary to his own will and purposes. They to whom he gave the oracles, and the law, and the predictions of the Messias, and declared beforehand, that at the 'coming of the Messias the blind should see, the lame should walk, and the deaf should hear, the lepers should be cleansed, and to

the poor the gospel should be preached,"¹ could not expect a greater conviction for acceptation of a person, than when that happened which God himself by his prophets had consigned as his future testimony ; and if there could have been deception in this, it must needs have been culpable in the deceived person, to whose error a divine prophecy had been both nurse and parent. So that taking the miracles Jesus did in that conjunction of circumstances, done to that people to whom all their oracles were transmitted by miraculous verifications, miracles so many, so great, so accidentally, and yet so regularly, to all comers and necessitous persons that prayed for it, after such predictions and clearest prophecies, and these prophecies owned by himself, and sent by way of symbol and mysterious answer to John the Baptist, to whom he described his office by recounting his miracles in the words of the prediction ; there cannot be any fallibility or weakness pretended to this instrument of probation, applied in such circumstances to such a people, who, being dear to God, would be preserved from invincible deceptions ; and being commanded by him to expect the Messiah in such an equipage of power and demonstration of miracles, were therefore not deceived, nor could they, because they were bound to accept it.

6. Thirdly, So that now we must not look upon these miracles as an argument primarily intended to convince the Gentiles, but the Jews. It was a high probability to them also, and so it was designed also in a secondary intention : but it could

¹ Isaiah, xxxv. 4, 5, 6 ; Matth. xi. 5.

not be an argument to them so certain, because it was destitute of two great supporters : for they neither believed the prophets foretelling the Messias to be such, nor yet saw the miracles done. So that they had no testimony of God beforehand, and were to rely upon human testimony for the matter of fact ; which, because it was fallible, could not infer a necessary conclusion alone and of itself, but it put on degrees of persuasion, as the testimony had degrees of certainty or universality ; that they also which see not, and yet have believed, might be blessed. And therefore Christ sent his apostles to convert the Gentiles, and supplied in their case what in his own could not be applicable, or so concerning them ; for he sent them to do miracles in the sight of the nations, that they might not doubt the matter of fact ; and prepared them also with a prophecy, foretelling that they should do the same and greater miracles than he did. They had greater prejudices to contest against, and a more unequal distance from belief and aptnesses to credit such things ; therefore it was necessary that the apostles should do greater miracles to remove the greater mountains of objection. And they did so ; and by doing it in pursuance and testimony of the ends of Christ and Christianity, verified the fame and celebrity of their master's miracles, and represented to all the world his power, and his veracity, and his divinity.

7. Fourthly, For when the Holy Jesus appeared upon the stage of Palestine, all things were quiet and at rest from prodigy and wonder : nay, John the Baptist, who, by his excellent sanctity and austerities had got great reputation to his person and doctrines, yet did no miracle : and no man

else did any, save some few exorcists among the Jews cured some demoniacs and distracted people. So that in this silence a prophet appearing with signs and wonders had nothing to lessen the arguments, no opposite of like power, or appearances of a contradictory design. And therefore it persuaded infinitely, and was certainly operative upon all persons, whose interest and love of the world did not destroy the piety of their wills, and put their understanding into fetters. And Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, being convinced, said, 'We know that thou art a doctor sent from God: for no man can do those things which thou doest, unless God be with him.'¹ But when the devil saw what great affections and confidences these miracles of Christ had produced in all persons, he too late strives to lessen the argument by playing an after-game; and weakly endeavours to abuse vicious persons (whose love to their sensual pleasures was of power to make them take any thing for argument to retain them) by such low, few, inconsiderable, uncertain, and suspicious instances, that it grew to be the greatest confirmation and extrinsical argument in behalf of religion, that either friend or foe upon his own industry could have represented. Such as were the making an image speak, or fetching fire from the clouds; and that the images of Diana, Cyndias, and Vesta, among the Jasiæans, would admit no rain to wet them, or cloud to darken them; and that the bodies of them who entered into the temple of Jupiter in Arcadia would cast no shadow. Which things Polybius himself, one of their own superstition, laughs at as impostures, and says they were no way to be excused,

¹ John, iii. 2.

unless the pious purpose of the inventors did take off from the malice of the lie.¹ But the miracles of Jesus were confessed, and wondered at by Josephus; were published to all the world by his own disciples, who never were accused, much less convicted of forgery; they were acknowledged by Celsus² and Julian,³ the greatest enemies of Christ.

8. But further yet, themselves gave it out, that one Caius was cured of his blindness by Æsculapius, and so was Valerius Aper; and at Alexandria, Vespasian cured a man of the gout by treading upon his toes, and a blind man with spittle. And when Adrian the emperor was sick of a fever, and would have killed himself, it is said, two blind persons were cured by touching him, whereof one of them told him that he also should recover.⁴ But, although Vespasian, by the help of Apollonius Tyaneus, who was his familiar, who also had the devil to be his, might do any thing within the power of nature, or by permission might do much more; yet besides that this was of an uncertain and less credible report, if it had been true, it was also infinitely short of what Christ did, and was a weak, silly imitation, and usurping of the argument which had already prevailed upon the persuasions of men, beyond all possibility of confutation. And for that of Adrian, to have reported it is enough to

¹ Lib. xvi. Hist.

² 'Ενομίσατε αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ χωλὸς ἢ τυφλὸς ἰθεράπειυσσε, dixit Celsus apud Origen.

³ Εἰ μὴ τις οἶται τῆς κυλλῆς ἢ τυφλῆς ἰάσασθαι, ἢ δαιμονίωντας ἐφορκίζειν, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι, &c. verba Juliani apud Cyril. lib. vi.

⁴ Spartianus in Adriano; qui addit Marium Maxumum dixisse, hæc facta fuisse per simulationem.

make it ridiculous. And it had been a strange power to have cured two blind persons, and yet be so unable to help himself as to attempt to kill himself by reason of anguish, impatience, and despair.

9. Fifthly, When the Jews and Pharisees believed not Christ for his miracles, and yet perpetually called for a sign, he refused to give them a sign which might be less than their prejudice, or the persuasions of their interest; but gave them one which alone is greater than all the miracles which ever were done, or said to be done, by any antichrist, or the enemies of the religion put all together; a miracle which could have no suspicion of imposture, a miracle without instance, or precedent, or imitation. And that is, Jesus's lying in the grave three days and three nights, and then rising again, and appearing to many, and conversing for forty days together; giving probation of his rising, of the verity of his body, making a glorious promise, which at pentecost was verified, and speaking such things which became precepts and parts of the law for ever after.

10. Sixthly, I add two things more to this consideration. First, that the apostles did such miracles, which were infinitely greater than the pretensions of any adversary, and inimitable by all the powers of man or darkness. They raised the dead; they cured all diseases by their very shadow passing by, and by the touch of garments; they converted nations; they foretold future events; they themselves spake with tongues, and they gave the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands, which enabled others to speak languages which immediately before they understood not, and to cure diseases, and

to eject devils. Now supposing miracles to be done by Gentile philosophers and magicians after ; yet when they fall short of these in power, and yet teach a contrary doctrine, it is a demonstration that it is a lesser power, and therefore the doctrine not of divine authority and sanction. And it is remarkable, that among all the Gentiles none ever reasonably pretended to a power of casting out devils : for the devils could not get so much by it, as things then stood : and, besides, in whose name should they do it who worshipped none but devils and false gods ? which is too violent presumption, that the devil was the architect in all such buildings. And when the seven sons of Sceva, who was a Jew, (amongst whom it was sometimes granted to cure demoniacs,) offered to exorcise a possessed person, the devil would by no means endure it, but beat them for their pains.¹ And although it might have been for his purpose to have enervated the reputation of St. Paul, and by a voluntary cession equalled St. Paul's enemies to him ; yet either the devil could not go out but at the command of a Christian, or else to have gone out would have been a disservice and ruin to his kingdom : either of which declares that the power of casting out devils is a testimony of God, and a probation of the divinity of a doctrine, and a proper argument of Christianity.

11. Seventhly, But, besides this, I consider that the Holy Jesus, having first possessed upon just title all the reasonableness of human understanding by his demonstration of a miraculous power, in his infinite wisdom knew that the devil would attempt

¹ Acts, xix.

to gain a party by the same instrument, and therefore so ordered it, that the miracles which should be done, or pretended to, by the devil, or any of the enemies of the cross of Christ, should be a confirmation of Christianity, not do it disservice: for he foretold that antichrist and other enemies 'should come in prodigies and lying wonders and signs.' Concerning which, although it may be disputed whether they were truly miracles, or mere deceptions and magical pretences; yet because they were such which the people could not discern from miracles really such, therefore it is all one, and in this consideration they are to be supposed such. But, certainly, he that could foretell such a future contingency, or such a secret of predestination, was able also to know from what principle it came. And we have the same reason to believe that antichrist shall do miracles to evil purposes, as that he shall do any at all: he that foretold us of the man, foretold us also of the imposture, and commanded us not to trust him. And it had been more likely for antichrist to prevail upon Christians by doing no miracles, than by doing any: for if he had done none, he might have escaped without discovery; but by doing miracles, as he verified the wisdom and prescience of Jesus, so he declared to all the church, that he was the enemy of their Lord, and therefore less likely to deceive. For which reason it is said, that 'he shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect:' that is therefore not possible, because that by which he insinuates himself to others, is by the elect, the church and chosen of God, understood to be his sign and mark of discovery, and a warning. And therefore, as the prophecies of Jesus were an infinite verification of his

miracles; so also this prophecy of Christ concerning antichrist disgraces the reputation and faith of the miracles he shall act. The old prophets foretold of the Messias, and of his miracles of power and mercy, to prepare for his reception and entertainment: Christ alone, and his apostles from him, foretold of antichrist, and that he should come in all miracles of deception and lying; that is, with true or false miracles to persuade a lie: and this was to prejudice his being accepted, according to the law of Moses.¹ So that as all that spake of Christ bade us believe him for his miracles, so all that foretold of antichrist bade us disbelieve him the rather for his. And the reason of both is the same, because the mighty and ' surer word of prophecy ' (as St. Peter calls it) being the greatest testimony in the world of a divine principle, gives authority, or reprobates with the same power. They who are the predestinate of God, and they that are the *præsciti*, the foreknown and marked people, must needs stand or fall to the divine sentence; and such must this be acknowledged; for no ' enemy of the cross,' not the devil himself, ever foretold such a contingency, or so rare, so personal, so voluntary, so unnatural an event, as this of the great antichrist.

12. And thus the holy Jesus, having ' showed forth the treasures of his Father's wisdom,' in revelations and holy precepts, and upon the stock of his Father's greatness having dispensed and demonstrated great power in miracles, and these being instanced in acts of mercy, he mingled the glories of heaven to transmit them to earth, to raise us up

¹ Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

to the participations of heaven. He was pleased, by healing the bodies of infirm persons, to invite their spirits to his discipline, and by his power to convey healing, and by that mercy to lead us into the treasures of revelation; that both bodies and souls, our wills and understandings, by divine instruments, might be brought to divine perfections in the participations of a divine nature. It was a miraculous mercy that God should look upon us in our blood, and a miraculous condescension that his Son should take our nature; and even this favour we could not believe without many miracles: and so contrary was our condition to all possibilities of happiness, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in miracle, we had perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. And now it would be but reasonable, that, since God for our sakes hath rescinded so many laws of natural establishment, we also, for his and for our own, would be content to do violence to those natural inclinations, which are also criminal when they derive into action. Every man living in the state of grace is a perpetual miracle; and his passions are made reasonable, as his reason is turned into faith, and his soul to spirit, and his body to a temple, and earth to heaven; and less than this will not dispose us to such glories, which being the portion of saints and angels, and the nearest communications with God, are infinitely above what we see, or hear, or understand.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, who didst receive great power, that by it thou mightest convey thy Father's mercies to us impotent and wretched people, give me grace to believe that heavenly doctrine which thou didst ratify with arguments from above, that I may fully assent to all those mysterious truths which integrate that doctrine and discipline, in which the obligations of my duty and the hopes of my felicity are deposited : and to all those glorious verifications of thy goodness and thy power add also this miracle, that I, who am stained with leprosy of sin, may be cleansed, and my eyes may be opened, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law : and raise thou me up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that I may for ever walk in the land of the living, abhorring the works of death and darkness. That as I am, by thy miraculous mercy, partaker of the first, so also I may be accounted worthy of the second resurrection ; and as by faith, hope, charity, and obedience, I receive the fruit of thy miracles in this life ; so in the other I may partake of thy glories, which is a mercy above all miracles. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Lord, I believe ; help mine unbelief ; and grant that no indisposition or incapacity of mine may hinder the wonderful operations of thy grace ; but let it be thy first miracle to turn my water into wine, my barrenness into fruitfulness, my aversations from thee into unions and intimate adhesions to thy infinity, which is the fountain of mercy and power. Grant this for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of those glorious attributes in which thou hast revealed thyself and thy Father's excellencies to the world, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

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